DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 438 196 SO 030 838

AUTHOR	Braun, Aaron, Ed.
TITLE	Moroccan Civil Society: Historical Traditions and Contemporary Challenges. Journal of the 1998 Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad, June 25-July 29, 1998 (Morocco).
SPONS AGENCY	Center for International Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	79p.; For a related item from this Moroccan Seminar, see SO 030 839. Administered by the Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange, Rabat, Morocco.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - General (020) -- Reports -- Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Area Studies; Foreign Countries; *Global Education; Higher Education; *Non Western Civilization; Study Abroad; *Travel
IDENTIFIERS	Fulbright Hays Seminars Abroad Program; *Morocco

ABSTRACT

This journal is a collaborative effort of the 1998 Fulbright-Hays Summer Abroad Program in Morocco. Each participant volunteered to record one, two, or more days of their seminar abroad in Morocco, and report on activities/lectures/travels/observations. It was hoped that this journal would provide a multi-voiced and multi-perspective document of the 5-week sojourn. The journal is divided into sections for each of 38 days of the seminar, and it ends with a few final reflections from some of the participants. (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 438 196

JOURNAL

OF THE 1998 FULBRIGHT-HAYS SEMINAR ABROAD IN MOROCCO

Moroccan Civil Society: Historical Traditions and Contemporary Challenges

(25th June – 29th July 1998)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: AARON BRAUN

SO 030 838

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

INTRODUCTION

This journal is a collaborative effort in which each participant volunteered to record one, two or more days of the Seminar and report on its activities/lectures/travels/observations. It was hoped that this would provide a multi-voiced and multi-perspective written document of the five-week sojourn.

We are grateful that entries were also provided by the gracious Seminar Coordinator, Carl Dawson and the beloved Tour Guide/Translator/Mother Figure, Fatima Casewit. Their final two entries provide, to say the least, quite the alternative perspective.

Thanks also to Carl Dawson for his final proofing, corrections, and the addition of translations of certain terms, as well as his many gallant efforts in providing us with Dinker Patel's photos. His herculean November exertions at the Commission aptly mirror his labors throughout the seminar in coordinating and ensuring that all went smoothly. We're just sorry this prevented him from travelling with us as often as we would have liked. I raise my Glen Livet to your Flag Spéciale, Boss!

A debt of gratitude is extended to the stalwart Betty Lau, who volunteered to substitute for another participant who, in his eternal search for the elusive, perfect tan, did not respond. We also appreciate Betty's meticulous proofing and editing of her entries, leaving hardly any work at this end. Mostly, however, she is appreciated for offering to make the occasional phone call to somewhat hostile environs in my stead and for generally providing her support and concern throughout. Bravo Betty!

Thanks and kudos are extended to the techno-wizards, Joseph Snook and Thomas Sunshine, for downloading and scanning graphics and files that were panic-invoking for this computer illiterate, and to Steven Sunshine for his scanning and proofreading assists.

Finally, this journal would have been a fiasco without Ilana Kilion's editing, proofing and organizational skills. Her laudable diligence and graciousness throughout these last weeks has been utterly inspired and inspirational.

Enjoy,

Aaron Braun

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24 -- MADRID, CASABLANCA, RABAT
JOHN CABE

For some of the group, getting to Morocco had an auspicious beginning. We were allowed the opportunity to stay in the airport at Madrid for several hours before leaving for Casablanca via Iberia Air. It did give some of us the chance to get to know a little about each other. I knew who my roommate was to be and actually met him in the airport at Atlanta as we had a delay there for an hour or so. I saw a fellow who looked like an Indian from Kenya so I just asked him who he was, and, lo and behold it was the Dinker. Apparently, none of the participants were seated together going to Madrid but I was talking to my seatmate about what I was doing and discovered that just across the aisle was another participant, Jerry Kaminski. He was busy reading the materials we had been sent so we did not talk much. (I, of course, had read the materials and committed them to memory before leaving the U.S.!)

Anyway, at Madrid we were constantly told there were air traffic control problems so we kind of grouped up and scoped each other out. Dinker found a couple of chairs to sleep on and the rest of us wandered around, eating and fussing. Eventually, they did provide a pretty good lunch for us and then just as we were finishing called us to the plane. Half of the group almost missed it since they had changed the gate for boarding the bus out to the plane. At any rate, we barely were seated before we pushed back. The next thing we knew they were throwing some sort of unidentifiable food at us. I learned later that participant Betty Lau ate hers and her seatmate's meal. She did not know at the time, but the seatmate turned out to be another participant, Jacob Abadi. This voracious appetite for such a petite woman would not be an uncommon sight throughout the trip!

On arriving in Casablanca, we were loaded onto the bus, which we would become quite familiar with over the next few weeks. Also, I learned a quick lesson when a young fellow grabbed a suitcase of Ajile's I was helping to load. Naturally, he wanted money, but having only $20 bills, I was in a sort of dilemma. He kept coming to the window with his buddies obviously wanting money. I finally borrowed a dollar from Jerry K. and threw it out the window to him (the dollar is in the mail, Jerry). I don't know if he was able to get the dollar changed. On the way to Rabat, my most interesting observation was the tremendous number of what appeared to be black plastic bags everywhere and TV satellites on almost every roof.

Getting checked into the hotel in Rabat was semi-organized bedlam. The hotel was located on a very noisy street, which took some getting used to for some participants. Once settled in, a few of the group went out for supper, which turned out to be pizza - not quite a great introduction to Moroccan food, but it was late and the cafe was near.

DAY 2: THURSDAY, JUNE 25 -- RABAT
JOHN CABE

I wake up very early the next morning and watch a man cleaning the sidewalk with a palm frond; basically he is pushing the trash into a kind of trough by the street. Breakfast turns out to be what would seem endless mornings of baguettes, croissants and apricot jam -- oh, just for an egg! We begin lectures at the commission, which is just a short walk away from the hotel. The first talks are about history. About three of the participants seem to want to dominate the discussions -- actually, I don't think they are interested in answers. Perhaps they just know a lot about the topics and/or like to be heard. Possibly this is a temporary phenomenon and will taper off later in the project.

Jerry Singer spends the day in the airport wistfully thinking his luggage might appear (it doesn't). We are taken to dinner at Dinarjat, a "typical" Moroccan cafe. It is quite an experience. The servers are incredibly tall and they just keep on bringing food, the most interesting probably being sheep brains. Betty is at my table and living up to her growing reputation, helping me eat much of my food. Jerry K. is going around with his video camera and I am giving expert commentary about the restaurant - something which I actually know nothing about but figure it's better than having silent film. The last two participants, Alba and Tim, finally show up -- they apparently had flight connection problems. Aaron tells me later that he dreamed about being chased by sheep demanding their brains. I have an unusual dream in which I had not brought enough clothes and had gone back to North Carolina to get more and was very concerned about getting back to Rabat so I would not miss the next morning's lecture. I suppose it would take some deep psychoanalysis to figure that out!

DAY 3: FRIDAY, JUNE 26 -- RABAT

JOHN CABE

Second full day of the program. Sleeping was very difficult probably due to the time changes as well as the noise from the streets. I am up at 5:00 A.M. and later help the restaurant staff open up. I can't wait for more baguettes and jam (actually, at this point I do not know this would be the case for many days to come). We have more lectures. The one on language is pretty good.

Some first observations about the group, whether accurate or not in the long run, just first impressions: Aaron is the only smoker in the group, although I did bring my pipe, which I probably will smoke occasionally. Aaron does seem respectful of the group, however, and goes to an open area or outside to smoke. I think he will be a humorous sort. Jerry Kaminski seems very gung ho about everything so far. Ajile dresses in incredible clothes. Elizabeth seems like a personable sort and able to get along with anyone. We had some pretty good talks in the airport in Madrid. It is too early in the project to assess others, but I am sure we will all have opinions of each other before it is over. As to how others might gauge me, well, probably as reserved and maybe a little moody (and these might be the good points). As to our leaders, Carl is younger than I expected him to be but seems very capable of keeping the program on track. Fatima, so far, seems to be reserved but not aloof. I think she will be a good leader for this group but she might have to crack a few heads to get them to shut up. Well, as usual when I have gone on these extended forays out of the country, I am a little homesick. But I suspect, as in the past, I will settle in to the routine in about a week and try to get all that I can from the experience. I am glad Aaron suggested the idea of the journal since I was keeping daily notes, in addition to lecture notes, anyway.

DAY 4: SATURDAY, JUNE 27 -- RABAT

LURANA AMIS

We are officially two-thirds orientated (oriented?) Still, by observation of others and frank confession, lagging and sagging at times. Phasing out...at least here, it's phasing... (In Fez, surely it'll be Fez-ing in or out.)

So, to recount: Ajile's on her fourth (if I count correctly), outfit, each more lovely than {before}. My room (shared with Mary)? I was up for no reason before six when streets are almost empty...the street sweep tidies up with wide swathes of a palm frond; the garbage truck is new and shiny putting NYC's to shame – but the noise rings true, alas! Sweet indulgence in not one but two fresh OJ's. A gallon would be about right.

At Centre, a look at books, especially on crafts. And the speaker? M. Ali Belhaj, former M.P. {Member of Parliament} and now "President of Maroc 20/20." Are we in presence of a TV personality? A CEO? A cadre? I'd say smart, a bit slick perhaps, articulate...and must have been trotted out a lot to show how well educated and modern we are. Thrust of talk: Morocco will defeat corruption with posters, an official day, governmental policy decision(s). Not to speak for all, but I feel a certain glibness. A few other questioners tried to get answers on grass-roots level and individual situations but "we" were mostly above it all... (I am a bit reminded of a series of symposia we had each year at school. We "solved" poverty, prejudice, racism... I suggested "death" and "evil" as the next topics. Or "war.")

Still, not to get impression of uselessness: a very interesting view, actually, of class who will, ideally, shape change and all... An impressive specimen...

"Working lunch" at the America Club. Connie McDaniel spoke of "expat" Woman's League (Club?) of Americans (?) who contribute funds, etc. Bees. Rabbits. Day care. All through other agencies in-need-of-a-hand, I think. Nicely well intentioned.

Then Mme. Chafia Walit who heads, in marriage, Association for Disadvantaged Children ("La Ligue," favored, I gather, by His Majesty). What isn't here? A most involved and "with-it" monarch, it would seem. (And it doesn't sound as bad a way to go in this part of the world, at that!)

But the peak for me, the zenith of the day (to use an Arab word and concept)? Lunch with Soeur Josephine and le Père et Docteur Couturier, the latter a Jesuit AND medical doctor, cellist and living legend. She, a nurse from Spain. Both here long years, working at ground level at Témara between Rabat and Marrakesh...with the neediest. "He is," said the good sister, "the doctor from God," the doctor doubtless. He treats and entreats, directing some to further help as possible, others to deal with himself, all day, each day. She to support and manage. Both wonderfully fun and compassionate, realist and unpretentious.

Both won my heart and hand: they've invited me to go out to Témara...and I've asked Fatima if it would be possible. ("That might be possible," said she...) These are the people I'll especially talk {about} to my "poor little rich kids" back home – and also a good spot to leave all left over Rx's from home and maybe more. Seriously impressive folk. Unique "saints," I think, and what luck to spend time with their like!

Vorwarts! To museum-by-the-sea in Sale with M. Mansour as docent. Jerry K, Nabil, Faris and I played at fun photos perched on cannons as we fought off corsairs. Pottery – many designs virtually identical to Amercudian SW ones.

Walk past women a'henna-ing but could not tarry. Investigate, oh Lurana. M. Mansour took us to peek in a window of a shrine(?), past a Sufi shrine (?) to a Medrasa (religious school) – now museum-ish. Just as in books – zeligs, stucco and wood - and so beautiful – with living "rooms" above where students slept and cooked in rooms 4'-6' maybe. Oh, yes. Medrasa has a fine roof looking over the Medina (old city).

On way back to bus: a private house/mansion/palace being restored. Some garish 19th Murano mirrors and lights...the whole not old...an uncomfortable mix of influences.

Bus got inextricably tangled in medina's one way streets. Finally Faris and Nabil got to run ahead to clear us a path while driver and his "helper" somehow got us out. Impressive driving -- and it's not an easy task to say least.

Twenty minutes to change to our fanciest for "Reception" at Centre...then the Ambassador shows up in jeans!!

Abstemious eating to let system catch up and a walk home with Ajile and talk of Témara and spirituality. She'd like to go visit too.

Back "home" to hotel for (almost) all packing and the Baggage Reduction and Organization Program. Ouf! Another great day!

DAY 5: SUNDAY, JUNE 28 -- RABAT, FES

ANN FEY

Sunday, June 28 is a travel day. We leave for Fes in the morning, at nine o'clock. We roll, tote and drag our luggage through the lobby of the Annakhil Hotel, which is quiet and empty in contrast to last night's colorful and crowded guys and gals scene when we returned from the Commission after the welcoming reception. Aziz stows our things in the lower compartments of the bus, for the trip north and east, which takes about four hours.

We stop in Khemisset and with our new, unfamiliar currency buy postcards, bottles of water, Fanta and Cokes. Some wait for the ice cream pops that come from the padlocked freezer. Pistachio wins hands down. On the road again, we continue to pass small villages, long sections of brownish orange earth, areas of rich irrigated vegetation, and occasionally here and there in the distance what appear to be small factories.

The entranceway of the Grand Hotel in Fes is a round of marble steps that lead up to a relatively cool, darkish lobby. Lunch is scheduled at the hotel, and even the adventurers who find it pricey and who might have preferred to head out to search for other locales, seem content with the three course event: omelette (you like fromage?), sliced beef with vegetables and French fries, and baskets of fresh fruit. Outside and across the street, women in groups and small clusters and singly hang around, some sitting on the curb, some leaning back in the shade. They are young and old, plain and glamorous, of differing dress styles and to untrained eyes, differing cultural features. Casual questions get casual answers: they come to get work. This seems to be a shape-up, non-union, and not job specific.

Alba and I discover our room is large and high-ceilinged, and opens with floor to ceiling louvers on to a side street, where a large wall encloses the market. In our stay, we are to have a high-angle view of little night time dramas on the isolated street.

We go to the Arabic Language Institute of Fes, and see the class rooms and the meeting rooms lined with book cases. Outside, in the garden area, long tables with benches are lined up. We vie for places under the arbor where the hot sun is filtered. Each of us has a local moment of fame as Carl calls on us for a short statement of our interest, which will be developed into a project. The range is great - literature, art, film, economics, politics, religion, sociology, education, and more.

Later, we ride around the city, Fatima giving us a thorough and enthusiastic overview of places we will visit. The bus rumble is overpowering, and for Fatima's temperate volume to compete, she yields to technology: the temperamental microphone. We pass a place where a stadium was planned, but the ground was found to be too soft, and only rows of piers stand. We ride around the outer city, and get an overview of the valley of Fes, where three rivers converge. Mohammed, a young boy wise in the ways of tourists, hangs around. Ajile captures the moment, befriends him and talks with him, and shows us, if we are watching, much about the ways of Islam. As the sun sets, the city of Fes seems to turn golden. Later that evening: dinner on your own. At the Casa Nostra Restaurant: good company, good talk, good pizza.

DAY 6: MONDAY, JUNE 29 -- FES

MICK LEWIS

Late evening of the day before, 'round midnight. The first surprise had come in the form of an announcement that Survival Arabic would begin at 8:00 a.m., two hours earlier than scheduled. The second was a serendipitous assembly in "the suite," as some wag dubbed the room Peter Hess and I occupied in the Grand Hotel. The open door was a standing invitation to passersby, several of whom took the door at its word of welcome. Ultimately, John, Dinker, the two Jerrys, Elizabeth, and Jacob arrived to hear Peter's plan for rescheduling certain days of our seminar. The king's birthday -- a public holiday -- loomed, a gigantic maw of a day when nothing would be open and nothing was scheduled; it followed a day when no more than a visit to the Qarawiyyin library was planned. Peter proposed extra days in Chefchaouen. In this revolutionary cabal, a radical Tangier faction emerged almost immediately. Jerry Kaminski promoted a Rif Mountain alternative, and Jerry Singer thought we might be, a bit further along at Tetouan, only a short hop from a Mediterranean beach. We dreamed various dreams, but Peter was ready to put the foundations under our various travel castles in the sky. As we broke up our "suite conspiracy," he promised to see Fatima in the morning.

Into breakfast at 7:00 a.m., we met Jerry K. and Alba, just in from their preprandial walkabout. OJ was "on the house" here at the Grand, a small offering to appease those whose rooms lacked the three star quality of the Annakhil in Rabat. And there was bread, visions of which danced in John Cabe's head. He had been hoping for a reprise of the luncheon omelette the day before.

At ALIF (Arabic Language Institute in Fez), Khadija, our first-day, one-day language instructor, waited for us at the gate like an old-fashioned schoolmarm, though her manner was anything but old-fashioned. With the first phrase out of my mouth, she recognized my paltry Arabic as Egyptian. In a small, cramped room at the nearby villa (with a fan à la Aaron Braun), we began to struggle (pace Jacob Abadi) with a new tongue. At first the fan Aaron was holding did not work, and Khadija gave us an insight into Moroccan culture from a Moroccan perspective: Moroccans, she said, kept broken things around just to show that they are "there."

Khadija began with a helpful distinction between Darija and Fusha, Moroccan Arabic as opposed to modern standard Arabic. She said their grammars were a bit different but that there were major differences in vocabulary and pronunciation, to some extent a consequence of loan words from French, Spanish, and Berber. The sounds of Darija and Fusha are the same, and she began with them, emphasizing the sounds not found in English. "Shwiyya b'shwiyya," we made our first hesitant sounds in Arabic. Khadija's "mezian" was a reward for almost every attempt, even those of the self-proclaimed expert(s) in the room.

Most of us lingered about ALIF after Arabic, awaiting lunch under the trees. A few were lucky enough to get off their first Fassi email messages. When lunch came, it began with a wonderfully welcome and colorful salad plate of potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, and greens; the entree was a bountiful plate of chicken and rice, and there were apples and bananas for the finish. Some went off for a Maghrebi siesta, and Jerry Singer had his first dip in the pool at the nearby deluxe hotel. Its lobby featured an exhibition of Middle Eastern furniture, one of the many cultural opportunities towards which Fatima pointed us.

As I returned for the afternoon lecture (held in the yard of the villa), I ran into Khadija, who embarrassed me with a quick "masa l'khair" and awaited the response that developed too slowly on my lips. The lecturer was Abdelhay Laabi, a professor of international relations, who was to enlighten us concerning the structure of the Moroccan government. His presentation was, to a considerable extent, a quick rehash of historical material presented in Rabat by Professor El Mansour, and he spent rather little time on the current structure of government. As usual, the question and answer session was more useful than the lecture itself. If, as the morning call to prayer has it, prayer is better than sleep, an afternoon lecture is not.

In the late afternoon, we made our first foray into Fez medina. Our bus departure, scheduled for five, was late, as Lurana wandered between the Grand and ALIF wondering where the bus could be. We walked through the Mellah, a largely Jewish quarter until 1967-1968; the street architecture with its balconies and grill work manifested Spanish influence. During our long, slow descent into the medina we gave little thought to the long ascent to come on the way back, but the ascent was lightened by slow movement past myriad shops and the graceful herding of the laggards among us by Faris and Nabil. Somewhere in this first Fassi sojourn, a street boy named Mohammed attached himself to us. We had first encountered him the evening before at the Merinid tombs overlooking the old city. He won the heart of Ajile, Aaron, and others, and we were destined to see him again. It was during this outing, too, that our inveterate video recorder (and only "Chicagoan"), Jerry Kaminski, caught the memorable words of Aaron Braun: "Chicago Sucks." Fatima rushed to quote this Brooklynesque *bon mot* to her son, Faris.

The first hints of the rampant consumerism to come surfaced on this outing. Both Ajile and I succumbed by purchasing a hamza knife; the price in the shop was 90 Dh ($1 = 9 Dh). Alba and John later secured the same item from someone hawking them on the street for 60 Dh. Jacob got the worst deal: he lost 200 Dh to a pickpocket and emerged with no knife at all.

Free for dinner, Aaron, Tim, Jerry S., Peter, John, and I dined at Fish Friture, hidden away inside a building on the Street of the Juice Bars (Avenue Mohammed V), a rather mundane end (in a culinary sense) to our first full Fassi day.

DAY 7: TUESDAY, JUNE 30 -- FES

PETER HESS

Today started out as pleasantly cool, if somewhat overcast. At breakfast, Jerry K. and Alba reported getting lost on their morning walk and fending off the services of an unwelcome tout (an oxymoron.)

The highlight of our second day of 'Survival Arabic,' was Aaron's entrance at 9:00, after which our instructor barricaded the door. The class is virtually all in Arabic. We pass picture cards around the room, usually with a different pronunciation for each word on every round. The key is sitting next to Mick, who actually seems to understand what's going on. The word for the day is 'bibi.'

After class several of us bought phone cards and Tim found his English newspaper. In the afternoon we took the bus to the medina for a talk, "Civil Society and the Preservation of the Fes Medina," followed by a walk through the 'new' medina. "Halwa" Tim bought a snack and then carried the wrapping for the next fifteen minutes. Not finding any trash receptacle (there are 11 in all of Morocco), Tim dropped his wrapping on the ground. Soon after, while in an old synagogue that was being restored, Tim received an "offering from the sky." A coincidence? I think not.

A group of seven went for an evening walk with Jerry 'log em' K. A short walk to the palace turned into an adventure of two hours and seven miles. We realized we were lost when we started through the medina. Eventually we got back to the hotel.

Interesting comments of the day:

Betty to Aaron: "You're so nice" (followed by her hysterical laughter).

Tim: "In Egypt, they put you on a camel, it goes racing off into the desert, and then they charge you more to come back."

Orange trees lined the road to the medina. We wondered who got to pick the oranges: "First come, first served" or "First come, first shot." Later we found out that the oranges belong to the city, so the latter was correct.

DAY 8: WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 -- FES

JACOB ABADI (YAKUB EFFENDI)

Nearly a week has gone by since the beginning of the seminar. We arrived at Fez after several days in Rabat. The illustrious group has already begun to show its distinct characteristics. The rich tapestry of personalities is sufficient to create a most dramatic Shakespearean play. What is most wonderful about this group is that everyone is passionate in his/her own way. One member of the group has great difficulty carrying the enormous luggage and needs constant help. Her command of the French language is commendable and she manages to entertain our driver. We have a very fine man who is the youngest of all. He is the most avid reader in the group, determined to take advantage of every moment to catch up on reading and on preparing for his next year's teaching assignments in the god-forsaken arctic university in which he is so fortunate to teach. We have also an avid learner, who with consummate skill uses two fingers and thus manages to record every detail in a tiny portable word processor, often under the most adverse conditions. Our group is also endowed with an avid eater who reminds us that there should be no waste in this trip. She likes to have bread with her butter and consumes all unwanted beefsteaks and other kinds of leftovers. (Perhaps this is the one of the reasons for her ability to be so caring and so genuine.) Then we have someone who knows everything about movies, actors, producers and the like. He seems so determined to save the tobacco industry from financial ruin and insists on wearing shorts for all occasions. He is intolerant of pretentious people and quick to criticize those whom he considers dishonest. He is endowed with a remarkable ability to use the F word in the appropriate place in almost every sentence. (No other person in the world is capable of a better impersonation of Robert De Niro's famous lines, "You talkin' to me? You talkin' to me? Well then, who the fuck you talkin' to? You talkin' to me?") But he has some redeeming qualities as well: he is exceptionally caring. He likes to take care of the weak and the sick, particularly when this helps him get into an air-conditioned environment.

We also have an artist who is famous for her unusual giggles. And we have a young, vivacious and playful, kind and lovely individual who loves to listen to Greek music. She tells us that she is from some colony, recently taken over by Greece. (She says that they call it Door-ham.) Then there is one member who is a great roommate and believes that only by hiking twice a day do you get to know Morocco. He is probably the most caring in the entire group. Another member of the group seems convinced that only by fancy hand movements one can get his/her point across. One of the female participants has become famous for her elaborate Islamic rituals, with thorough ablutions and timely prayers. Our Kenyan delegate has such a captivating smile that it disarms everyone. It makes you amazed how sweet human beings can get. We are also fortunate to have one member whom the Fezi merchants in the medina like to call Ali Babba, and whose uncanny command of the details pertaining to the trip is so admirable that one turns to him for any question. (Particularly when we don't know where we are going!) And what is more commendable is the patience and the charm with which this individual responds to such queries: "Yes, we will stop at Beni Mellal on our way to Marrakech!"

Two of our members seem so quiet and so gentle but they tend to stick together and withdraw from the group. Then we have another member who is in constant search of swimming pools and good time. He loves to wear shorts and dreams of lying under the sun. He is searching for Club Med and can't wait to show his wife how beautiful Morocco is!

And we have a tall, blue-eyed chaperon, so graceful and so elegant, whose ability to switch instantly from English to French and to Arabic is astounding. She cares for all of us. Oh, how lovely she looks when she can't help but smile at our jokes! And then there is me, Yakub Effendi, an affectionate sobriquet recently coined by none other than Ali Babba. I am somewhat of a dreamer, absent-minded at times, never look at the schedule and find it acceptable to be led by others. The group's ability to forgive my failings is commendable. Yakub loves the group and is determined to enjoy every moment of the trip. (Consider the fact that I am coming from Colorado Springs, a city that resembles 16th century Geneva under Calvin, where religious fanatics manage to coexist happily with rednecks and other bigots. A place where there is such a clear-cut distinction between "right" and "wrong" and everything is either "black" or "white," "Yes Sir" or "No Sir.") How refreshing it is for me to be in a more tolerating environment, where I do not have to be so politically correct, where I can be frivolous and make mistakes! By all accounts, this is an extraordinary group.

Fez seems impressive. There is much history here. There is a medina, through which we strolled today. The shopping spree has not begun yet. Everyone seems to be so cautious and no one has purchased anything yet. We saw many things in the medina. So many merchants were eager to sell their wares. (They must have been really pissed that we did not seem eager to buy.) So far, I did not put my extraordinary bargaining skills to the test. We continued to walk and marvel at the exotic *souq* (traditional market). We saw slaughtered cows, lambs and roosters hanging upside down, mules carrying merchandise through the narrow and smelly alleys of the medina, worshippers in the adjacent mosques, crippled persons and many beggars, kids in particular. It was sad to witness how these kids were mistreated by some of these merchants who were so anxious to attract tourists like us! There were also self-appointed young guides eager to show us the way and a cute boy named Muhammad, who wore shorts and a yellow T-shirt, and who did not fail to be there when we needed him most. And there were also pickpockets. With incredible dexterity, a young man helped himself to a 200 dirham bill, which I had in my pocket. (What a shame! The first 200 dirhams were gone without a purchase!)

Yesterday we had a chance to see a general view of Fez. Now we are in the midst of the city. It is so hot, but we were lucky enough to get air-conditioned rooms in the Grand Hotel. By then some of us were ready to swap their diplomas for an air conditioner. Soon we learned that the Grand Hotel has a legend of its own. It provides accommodations for firangies and livelihood for the Fez underworld. But what did it matter to miserable creatures like us, whose only dream was a quiet and cool room?

This morning the entire group began to study Arabic for survival. Khadija, that lovely woman who introduced us to the darija, has taught us the basic phrases. By the end of the lesson everyone knew how to say *labbas*, *mezien bizzaf*, *kifkif* and other words which were later used frequently by the group. Fatima has arranged for me to participate in an advanced class offered at the Fez Language Institute. It was a rewarding experience, but to my dismay, it kept me away from the group. We

also had the opportunity to visit a handicraft workshop and a nearby store, which gave us some ideas of what we might want to purchase. Many items were mentioned, but the most frequently talked about item was the *jellaba*. One of female participants wondered what was under the men's jellabas.

As the sun set on the *ville nouvelle* (new city), we went to dinner and then to a small juice store where we sat that night. It was a rewarding experience.

DAY 9: THURSDAY, JULY 2 --FES

AARON BRAUN

It is our fourth day of Survival Arabic. Unlike Tuesday's session, wherein I was an hour late, the 30 dh Chinese alarm clock purchased at the souq, with the aid of Si Mick's keen ears, awakens me to yet another continental breakfast of croissants and bread. This morning John Cabe seems to have a forlorn look about him...

Regarding the night before, when a group of six stout-hearted Americans was accosted by a lunatic hat-hawker with probably the worst set of teeth we have yet encountered in a land sorely lacking in dental hygiene, Mick begins the day with an upbeat thought: "We've [probably] developed an immunity to Moroccan spittle!"

Ajile sports yet another new outfit: yellow top, black scarf and multi-colored slacks.

The Survival Arabic session is as playfully earnest as preceding days, with Mary offering the poetic *sabaH al-khair mein herr* to arriving males. Jerry the K has the spotlight, asking classmates to identify various picture cards, when Elizabeth throws him with a devilish knock on the door... A distraught Jerry the K responds with *Abdeslam* ("servant of peace," our beloved instructor's name), rather than *Aji Abselam* ("come in and sit down..."). Abdeslam is beside himself with laughter...

As counterpoint, all are later transfixed by an exchange between Abdeslam and Si Mick, as instructor attempts to throw student to no avail. Si Mick matches Abdeslam line for line, including a perfect response to his knock on the door. Mick is soundly cheered -- at least one of us seems to be picking this up.

As the class ends, Fatima arrives with the news that Carl strongly suggests we forget about our trip to Tetouan.

10:30 A.M. - We arrive at the Jewish quarter and its cemetery. Here I find myself empathizing with Fatima as, in Jacob's absence, I translate the pathetically broken Hebrew of the cemetery caretaker, whose Arabic and French [according to Fatima] are also suspect. Our guide, Driss Mansour, suggests further that the caretaker's sense of the anecdotal history of the Jews in Fes and Morocco is equally suspect, and should be taken with a healthy dose of salt. For instance, there are 3 or 4 other cemeteries that claim to have a resident 17 year old virgin Jewess put to death by a frustrated sultan when she refused to convert to Islam; and, the tombs directly by the gate did not house the descendants of Maimonades, as the caretaker had suggested. As we go through the structure containing the museum, school, hospital and playground, one wonders if the Torah is indeed 400 years old, as the caretaker claims. The report cards in the classroom are mainly from the 50's and 60's, before the Six-Day War, when the mass exodus of Jews began, but some are as recent as 1983. There is an abundance of material plastered all over the walls, on desks and inside cabinets, and it is only on my next day's visit with Jacob that I really get a sense of the clutter, ranging from post cards to photos of politicos, anatomy class skeletons to fountain pen nubs. The most provocatively absurd item, though, is a game boy atop one desk... What manner of "museum" is this, I wonder?

Giving a total of 70 dh to the caretaker and his key-brandishing assistant [whose teeth resemble that of our previous night's assailant], the group places some coins in a *tszdakka* [alms] box at the door, and we take leave of the enigma.

After a cous-cous lunch at the ALIF garden, we go off to yet another lecture on "pious endowments and the Association Fes-Saiss as manifestations of civil society." As it is my journal day, I studiously take pen and pad to hand, but 'civil society' and the offerings of the painfully monotoned Ahmed Kostas, Director of International Relations, are the least of my concerns as I begin note taking:

The lecture room is slightly too comfortable, with couch cushions that seductively beg our indulgence. Jerrys K and S had been to the hotel pool earlier that afternoon, and sunbathing does not facilitate their attentiveness. Jerry S wears his strategic shades and lays back on his cushion. Jerry K slips off his loafers.

As mutterings on the "history and traditions of Fes...the stork house and Moorish baths" waft through the air, the Dink dozes, Alba sits forward to combat the urge, whilst Mary, ever stalwart, is frantically beating on her game girl computer.

At 3:50 P.M., Jerry S begins to snore! Across the room, too near Mr. Kostas to assume that he is unaware of having lost one member of his captive audience, Lurana motions for me to jostle him. I obey. Jerry S is unappreciative. Ann winks.

3:57 P.M. - Ajile drops her books, notes and cards, yet again...

4:00 P.M. - Betty sits back and dozes...

4:02 P.M. - Dinker assumes the lotus position... Even the ever-attentive Fatima rests her weary head to hand.

JESUS H. CHRIST! DOES EVERYONE IN MAROC LECTURE IN MONOTONE!?!

4:06 P.M. - Jerry the K has been picking his feet for some 17 minutes now...

4:08 P.M. - Jerry K stops, sits back, obviously satisfied with his prolonged pedicure...

...Kostas drones on about the poor (*miskeen*), with earnings of less than one US dollar a day...

4:11 P.M. - Jerry K has seemingly missed a spot on his left foot, and avidly resumes his ritual...

...Kostas finally merits attention when he begins discussing child rug-weavers, an element of Maroc that we had been introduced to, quite traumatically, the day before at the Artisan's Gallery. He speaks of their fingers becoming distorted after a time; cataracts as a major health issue; UNICEF's five-year plan to remedy the horror; and, the approximately 250 "children of the street" wandering about Fes...

"...They're like little rabbits..." was Elizabeth's profoundly moving response to some of the younger rug-weavers the day before, as concealed hands beckoned behind silk and wool, out of sight of the matrons overseeing their labor.

At 4:45 P.M., Fatima's freshly poured tea is served...

We decide to visit the Musee Batha, scheduled for later this month, but, inasmuch as altered plans and "Fulbright Time" are the rule of thumb, we seize the moment.

The Batha is followed by a respite inside a cedar-laced government building that is state of the art, garish and, after the afternoon lecture, woefully depressing... [Post-seminar note: One of the most potent smells of Morocco, along with donkey droppings, leather tanneries and the like, is certainly the sweet scent of cedar...] Various Fulbrighters horse around - we're just killing time before our scheduled dinner at...

The Palais Mnebhi. Situated in the heart of the souq, the restaurant proves almost as grandiose as our first night in Rabat at the Dinarjat... There are no musicians serenading us this evening, but the food is nearly as exquisite, with the bastilla provoking seconds and the cous cous dry enough to induce first time-hand-to-mouth forays by Betty, Mary and myself...

After dinner [during which the restaurant owner regales us with yet another lecture, Fatima translating again], we ascend the stairs to the cactus-pear and grape-vined rooftop, where we are truly regaled by Fes's nighttime vista.

We return to the Grand Hotel where Alba and Fatima have faxes waiting. Fatima's hails from Carl and contains project updates... Jacob and Dinker embark on a system-clearing walk while the rest of us turn in.

DAY 10: FRIDAY, JULY 3 -- FES

AJILE AMATULLAH-RAHMAN

Today is Jumah (Friday), the best day of the week and we are in Fes, the spiritual and cultural heart of Morocco. What a fortunate combination. Fatima Casewit, our competent and engaging tour guide, has arranged for me to say the weekly congregational prayers at the Qarawiyyin mosque, the oldest mosque university in the world. Fatima has gone out of her way to see that I am able to visit different *masjid* (mosques) throughout the areas that we travel in. Some are grand, some are plain, but they all are simply beautiful.

After praying at the Qarawiyyin, our group went to visit a factory in the industrial section of Fes. The owner was a young Moroccan who had received a government loan to upgrade and expand his business. He produced vinegar and hot sauce, giving us samples to take home, while also explaining the manufacturing process and the machinery involved. It was interesting.

What was really amazing for me was the provision made for the guards and their families who lived on the premises and the tour of his warehouse. The warehouse was the site where Moroccan women were packing capers. The whole scene was an interesting mix of the old and new as we saw women working in an assembly-line type of setting, but without the machinery. The work was labor intensive and the women were mostly dressed in traditional clothing.

The highlight of all this activity was a young Moroccan woman who worked alone. She filled, weighed and sealed huge drums of capers. They weighed so much that most men would be hard-pressed to handle them, but she did. Not only did she do it, she did it with such style and panache that it gave new meaning to Donna Summer's "She Works Hard for Her Money." The lady's spirit and determination gave her a walk, or rather a strut, of such confidence that no *haute couture* model could hope to imitate on a Parisian catwalk.

We were all amazed, and somewhat appalled, at the amount of work this girl had to handle. It was obvious that her strength came from her sheer will and not her body, which had been a size 4. She noticed us staring at her. We spoke. She looked at us and smiled -- a smile that came from her lips and her eyes. I was awed. It made me want to hug her and shout "You go girl!" But instead, I introspectively thought about how blessed I was to have an education and to live in a society where I could use my brains, instead of my brawn, to make a living. And that being a woman didn't relegate me, theoretically, to a certain role or socio-economic position in a developing society.

All in all, it was an interesting day for me. To pray at and visit the oldest mosque-university in the world, which was founded by a woman, and then to see her geographical descendant working as hard as a man made for an interesting mix of what it meant to be Moroccan, Muslim, female, and uneducated.

DAY 11: SATURDAY, JULY 4 -- FES

BETTY LAU

Munching Through Morocco I, or *Ruminations On a Very Long, Tiring Day Packed With Lectures and a Walking Tour of the Medina Where the Group Split Into Two and How One Group Got Lost, Was Found by Little Mohammed and Jaiwat, Who Rescued Us From Wandering the Medina Forever*

The morning lecture was conducted at the *madrasa Bou Inania* in a 3-sided room looking out onto a courtyard. The mosque part was no longer in service. Abdelhadi (Ken) Honerkamp gave the lecture on "Civil Society in Sufi Teachings." Sitting cross legged, he rocked back and forth, as if to soothe himself. While I remember nothing about the lecture, I do remember the story of his conversion. Short version: While in Pakistan in '69, he was severely burned by a spilled pot of hot oil. That accident caused him to re-think his life, so he "entered" Islam, as the saying goes. Later on, I discovered that Ann had heard of him and his best friend while she was on a Fulbright to Pakistan. They were legends because of their "miraculous" conversions. We later met the friend, Abdurrahmane Mike Fitzgerald, who converted because he was delayed by an avalanche from getting back to Ken, who was recuperating in a remote mountain village. It's always fun meeting legendary figures.

Wandering over to a corner during a break, I saw remnants of the original water canal running through the courtyard. Fes' entire canal system is underground, and has been partially restored in some places. Though non-functioning, it was still impressive. I re-joined the group as Abdelhadi explained in loving detail the architecture, the special features of the tile work and the calligraphy scrolling around the walls.

He then led us on a walking tour of the Fes Medina, a place of extremely narrow, crowded streets where donkeys still pack supplies, merchandise, and riders. We frequently leapt into shops and doorways as the heavily loaded donkeys trotted by. We paused in front of *zawiyas* (shrines), peered into open doorways, sneaked a peek into the Qarawiyin Mosque (where only Ajile could enter), visited a restored *funduq* (now the Museum of Wood), as well as one that was unrestored (now an artisans' workplace). A highlight, or quite possibly a nadir, of the tour (depending on your sense of smell) was the tannery. Hardly possessing a sense of smell myself, I know that if I can even get a whiff of something, it must be extremely odiferous to others. No wonder Abdelhadi bought bouquets of mint for us to sniff!

Dallying towards the rear of the group, I paused to buy dried figs with the assistance of Nabil, who patiently rounded up straggling teachers and shooed away would be hangers on. The shopkeeper poured more figs into the bag than I wanted and charged an outrageous 40 dirhams. He reduced the price to a more reasonable 30 when I went into shocked shopper mode as Nabil conveyed my displeasure.

We lunched on the rooftop of the Palais de Fes, overlooking the green tiled roof of the Qarawiyin Mosque. It was so hot, I only had a salad, regretfully passing on the chicken tajine. People inquired if I were ill.

We moved inside the restaurant rather than face walking back to the madrasa for Lecture #2 on Sufis. This restaurant (and most homes as we found out on our homestays) had huge sofas lining three walls. Dining takes place in the corners at round tables. Those not sitting on the sofa side get to sit on stools. We drank the ubiquitous mint tea and coffee. As usual, the tea was made with a sugar cube the size of a salt lick. The Fes Rotary Club presented Ann with a pennant to take back to the New York Rotary. The local club was sending a teenage boy to New York for an operation through the Gift of Life program. Ann generously offered to meet the boy and his sister so that they would know someone when they arrived in New York. After Abdelhadi's lecture, we began walking to the zawiya of Moulay Idriss.

Our large group split into two, with one batch going off with Abdelhadi while the rest of us followed Fatima. We promptly got lost in the maze of streets. Just when we needed help, little Mohammed popped up, in the same yellow shirt, with another one of his friends, Jaiwat. Fatima asked him the way out and he led us straight to the gate she named. Along the way, someone asked Mohammed where he had learned English. He replied, "Tourists." As he walked beside me, he used his index fingers to pull up the corners of his eyes and recited, "Chinese"; he pulled the corners down and recited, "Japanese." He happily repeated these actions and Dinker followed suit. I asked Dinker not to repeat those offensive gestures, but he said the boy didn't mean any harm. I knew that, but still felt distressed. I asked Faris to explain to Mohammed why he shouldn't do that to me or other Asians. Then it occurred to me that Faris might not know either, so I explained that it is very offensive to Asian Americans because it's a hurtful stereotype about our eyes.

Reunited with the other group, we set off for Najia's house, where we had a simple meal of salad, deep fried sweet bread and mashed eggplant topped off with a bowl of scrumptious harira (Moroccan soup). Her home in the medina will be Ann's homestay. The dining room also functioned as a living room and sleeping area, with sofas along three walls. Opening the bathroom door to wash my hands, I was shocked to find only a Turkish toilet and a shower head in a space only as wide as the door. How do you shower over a toilet?? Mary asked and found out that you throw a board over the toilet. But still, I wondered where people put their clothes since the toilet occupied the entire space.

While we were there, a Rotary Club member brought over the Gift of Life recipient and his sister. Ann warmly and graciously received them and assured them that she would be there for them when they came to New York for the boy's heart surgery.

At Najia's, we heard the sad tale of a beggar woman who had followed the other group while they waited for us in the medina. A shopkeeper had come out and started to beat her with a stick to drive her away. She refused to leave and he beat her some more. Another shopkeeper came out and told him not to hit her. Then he tried to persuade the woman to leave. But Mary related that the first shopkeeper spoke loudly and continued to hit her as she wailed and protested. No one intervened, but Elizabeth finally stepped forward and gave her 50 dirhams (instead of the usual one or two) which the beggar woman seemed not to notice. Mary suspected the woman may have been mentally retarded or was insisting on her right to beg since she would not leave despite being beaten.

Organized by Jerry K, some of us decided to walk back to the hotel, but the bus driver wouldn't allow it, despite our telling him in fractured French (me) and fluent Arabic (Jacob) that we wouldn't be returning on the bus. He insisted that we had to have Fatima's permission. Fatima already knew, but he needed her to tell him directly. Once that was taken care of, we walked back to the Annakhil.

Additional Notes: The Museum of Wood Incident: Aaron reports, "Alba entered the men's restroom."

Editorial comment: Aaron, I'm sure she was only trying to help.

Mick, intrepid field trip planner, wishes to go on record as having broached Fatima about visiting the Cascades d'Ouzoud near Beni Mellal. Carl was worried about the road quality, but the bus driver thought it wasn't a problem so Fatima and Carl said the group could decide. Final vote: 16 to 1 in favor.

DAY 12: SUNDAY, JULY 5 -- FES, CHEFCHAOUEN

MARY TYLER

This is my day for contributing to the collective journal writing. It is also my grandson's ninth birthday. Happy birthday, David!

Jerry K and I went out to walk at six, as we usually did. He wanted to explore the hill behind the A.L.I.F. language center but just as we left the paved road, we met a barefoot man coming up the dirt track towards us. He managed to make us understand that we should not go further because it was wet and swampy. He indicated that we would need galoshes up to above our knees to get through, so we turned back and walked onto Boulevard Hassan II. Unfortunately, I had not learned the town the way others have, even though I have been on just about as many walks. On this trip I have inadvertently replicated the experiment in brain research that I always describe to my students to explain why they should do their own homework. Here's that story, for David and the journal.

In the first part of the experiment, researchers raised one half of a litter of kittens in an environment in which they could see only horizontal lines and the other half in an environment where they could see only vertical lines. After three months, they released all the kittens in a playroom and observed their behavior. The kittens raised with vertical lines wandered happily on the floor, but they could not jump to or from a low table. The ones raised with the horizontal lines could jump easily from one horizontal plane to another, but they kept bumping into the legs of tables and chairs because they couldn't see them.

In the second part of the experiment, another litter of kittens was reared in total darkness. Naturally, when they were released into the playroom after three months, none of them could see at all. The researchers allowed half of the blind kittens to wander freely, and they rigged a sort of basket for each of the other kittens to ride in. Each freely exploring kitten was attached to one of the baskets in such a way that the kitten riding in it went everywhere the lead kitten went. At the end of the experiment, the lead kittens had learned to see, but the kittens in the baskets were still blind.

Jerry K. was definitely the lead kitten in our walk along Hassan II Boulevard. I couldn't find even as notable a landmark as the Hotel Sheraton. I will have to remember to bring a compass next time I come to Morocco.

Yesterday was a very long hard day, and several of us were under the weather. Nonetheless we packed and boarded the bus more or less on time, leaving the bulk of our stuff locked behind the reception desk in the Grand Hotel in Fez. Our original itinerary allowed two days in Chefchaouen, but the group decided unanimously to extend the stay by another two days, returning to Fez on the king's birthday (July 9) when most businesses would be closed.

The previous night during dinner we had seen some of the television programming honoring the king and building up to the coming celebrations. On our morning walk, when Jerry K pointed out the Sheraton to me, I saw a ring of Moroccan national flags that hadn't been there before. (I thought at first the flags would help me find the Sheraton again some time, but then I realized they would probably be taken down at the end of the week.) Once we got out on the road to Chefchaouen I saw similar clusters of flags. Probably those too were put up just for the king's birthday.

I tried to imagine a special day in the USA on which everyone would take off work and hold feasts and parties to celebrate Clinton's birthday. Every major television network would do a weeklong series of specials on his life. Meanwhile, in our homes we would raise our glasses and toast him and Hillary and Chelsea, telling each other how wonderful they all are and how lucky we are to have them as our first family. Hmmm.

By 10:30 in the morning we were well into the foothills of the Rif. There are crops, olive groves, streambeds (some wet, some dry, all green). The hillsides look drier, but still green. Oleanders love it here -- they seem to thrive along the little rivers. They are lusher even than the oleanders I remember from south Florida. Everywhere there are nopal, eucalyptus, willows. I saw two black and white storks guarding their nest in a tree. We passed men walking alone in brown djellabas with peaked hoods drawn up over their heads, the front part doubled back. I saw bedding laid out to dry alongside a *oued* (river). The road on which we were traveling was narrow, sometimes obstructed by tractors or donkey carts, but completely free of chuckholes.

Our first stop, said Fatima, would be Ouazzane, a town built around a shrine. We were allowed about a half hour there. Those of us who could do so passed up the restrooms in favor of a quick look at the medina. Nothing really exciting, mostly housewares and everyday clothing or bedding.

The mountains after Ouazzane seemed nearer and higher. We gaped at what looked like a recent accident in which a white car went off the road and landed right side up far, far down in the valley. We had previously seen an ambulance. Had it been called for that accident? Onlookers were standing around staring down at the car. Maybe we had just missed the disaster. I was glad that for the time being we were traveling the inside lane -- the one next to the mountainside rather than the one whose edges crumble into the void.

The mountaintops are rounded, with short, sparse, bushy vegetation. Crops are planted in the valley next to the oued. Women here wear straw sombrero-like hats with a distinctive yarn decor. Fatima explained that each hat is decorated with four streamer-like cords from the crown to the edge of the brim. The color of the cord indicates the region where the wearer lives. Aside from that the baubles are distinctive for each village. The women also wear hand-woven rectangles of fabric with patterns of red and white or red, white and black stripes. They tie these around their hips so that they hang skirt-like over their other clothing. I puzzled over the function of these pieces of fabric. I suspect that their main purpose is not as a garment but rather to carry loads, like similar weavings that I have seen in Guatemala. These Riffian styles are not seen in other parts of Morocco, said Fatima.

We passed through a border crossing, no longer in operation, between what was once the Spanish protectorate and what was the French protectorate. The terrain looked to me more and more like New Mexico. There were newly planted pine trees on the hillsides and more of those gorgeous pink oleanders along the road and in the streambeds. Finally we rounded the curve that gave us our first view of Chefchaouen nestled neatly on the side of the Rif mountain range. Our bus threaded through a maze of streets, some quite steep, to the door of our charming "parador."

After the usual check-in and bag-drag, we gathered in the lobby for our walking tour, which began with a visit to the "zawiya" for the founder of the city. Our guide, Si Azzedine, explained that this is a sanctuary into which one can flee and not be pursued. People can be married here for free if they are needy. Other families prepare the food and celebration for them. Couples that are having problems can also come for help in solving their problems. On the Prophet's birthday people can come to have their sons circumcised. The children are given clothes and sweets. All these charitable acts are "waqf," about which we had heard a great deal in previous days. Tradition demands that those who are well off provide circumcision and marriage celebrations for the poor.

We climbed and descended the narrow streets to a shop where a weaver was working his loom. Si Azzedine explained that much of the weaving proceeds go to pay the man who calls the faithful to prayer, the reader of the Koran, and the astronomer who determines the times for prayer and for Ramadan, and so on. In some ways, weaving is here more a spiritual than a material enterprise. The shops, which provide employment, are "waqf" contributed by those who are well off and want to live in Chefchaouen, which is commonly referred to by the affectionate abbreviation "Chaouen."

After visiting the weaver, we climbed to the cool walks beside the constantly flowing spring that produces Chefchaouen's famous water. The spring seemed powerful, imposing, and loud. This was July, the dry period. In winter, we learned, the places where we were standing would be under water.

After the walking tour, we had a little time on our own. Aaron was charmed by the reactions of the children to us foreigners. "Hola! Coca-Cola! Española!" they chanted, over and over. Whenever they could, they practiced whatever snippet of English they could think of. One child gaily greeted me by shouting "Michael Jackson!"

I was eager to just be a tourist in Chefchaouen. The shopping looked tantalizing, the people kind and relaxed, the street scenes colorful. There were gardens, cafes, beautiful skies -- like the most picturesque Spanish town you ever saw, but with a mosque in the middle. Several of us congratulated ourselves on the wisdom of having requested an extension of our stay here. For the first time in Morocco, I began to feel that I could find my own way around without being led from place to place. I had the feeling that if I got lost in Chefchaouen, I would not stay lost long.

As the afternoon turned into evening, we filed into the courtyard of the home of Sidi Ali Raissuni, a benevolent patriarch of the civil society of Chaouen. He was our host for a concert of Andalusian music. On one side of the courtyard, a group of girls and young women were applying henna to each other's hands. The music, once the orchestra tuned up and started playing, was vigorous, half-plaintive, half-joyous, with a great tenor counterpoint. The violinists played their instruments vertically, propped on one knee rather than under the chin. The electronic keyboard was a modern touch, but with a traditional sound. There were also a drum, an oud, a tambourine, and several extra singers. The lead singer went from one song right into another, never showing signs of weakening.

I sat transfixed by the intense beauty of this strange music, but all around the courtyard children continued to play and talk. From time to time, the host, who was engaged in greeting a steady stream of local dignitaries as they arrived, would spontaneously join the singing, then he would casually resume talking to his guests. When the musicians took a break, the girls with the henna invited the women Fulbrighters to get decorated too. I was surprised to learn that henna is more like mud than the liquid dye I had imagined. I smudged the design twice while I was waiting for it to dry and trying to drink tea at the same time.

The musicians played and sang, then rested, then played and sang some more. People moved around through the rooms off the courtyard. A few older women were resting on the divans of a side room. Tea and cookies were passed around to everyone. I looked up and saw that the balconies above us were crowded with women. Some of the children who had been playing in the courtyard suddenly disappeared into a stairwell, then reappeared upstairs, smiling down over the railings. There was no air of special ceremony. I became aware that we had been invited into the unselfconscious heart of a large extended family. Chefchaouen is their ancestral home, their orientation to the world. They always know were they are.

I really must remember to carry a compass when I travel.

DAY 13: MONDAY, JULY 6 -- OUR FIRST FULL DAY IN CHEFCHAOUEN

JERRY KAMINSKI

By the end of this day we would learn that Si Ali Raissouni is not only an eccentric patriarch, but also an energetic politician who tries to use his clout whenever he can. We would also discover that Chefchaouen is an unforgettably delightful place that will probably bring us all back to Morocco, if anything can, for another visit.

We all woke up this morning with the mellifluous sounds of Andalusian music fresh in our memories from our first evening in Chefchaouen. I doubt than any of us will forget either Si Ali's welcome concert or the members of his extended family who joined us for the evening. How long did the henna designs that the children drew on the hands of some of the Fulbrighter girls last anyway? How many photos of the evening did Betty take with her wide-angle lens? And how many of those delicious treats did we consume before we left? And how many times on that first night did Jacob say that he loved this city in the Rif Mountains? And what a great courtyard house! We were all impressed by this musical affair. It truly set the tone for the remainder of our visit to this mountain town.

For me this Andalusian concert is one of the great highlights of our seminar. If not for the music it provided, then for the insight that the experience gave us into Spanish aspect of Moroccan culture. At the beginning we all tried to appreciate the musicians' artistry according to our Western tradition of audience; in a short while though we learned that we were entirely too formal and stiff. The children showed us how to loosen up and in the process made our stay that much more joyful and richer. Would Grandfather really have shared "it" with Aaron if the Fulbrighters had not adapted? Alba and I started our first Chefchaouen morning by hiking up to the mosque ruins that overlook the city. The up-hill trek surprisingly took only 30 minutes and was definitely a lot easier than the nerve-racking exercise of dodging petit taxis in the crazy Rabat streets. We climbed to the top of the abandoned minaret and relished an incredible view of the sunrise gracing a sleeping city and lifting off the city's dew cover.

Eventually, other groups of Fulbrighters would follow in our footsteps to appreciate this sight. Fatima said that Daoud was so inspired by this trek that he continued on up to the top of the adjacent mountain. Everyone in their group made it except for Faris and Nabil who were staggered on their way by the smile of a Berber shepherdess.

At long last John was able to order eggs for breakfast on our first morning in Chefchaouen, another indication that this village was going to please and satisfy. John had been hunting for eggs since day one like a knight searching for the Holy Grail. And his quest would not be stopped even if his

Appalachian belly was already stuffed with Si Ali's goodies from last night's festivities: "I'm gonna eat these eggers whether I want to or not," John said yolkingly. Tim, who had started to feel slightly healthier, had a difficult time digesting John's heroic determination. The rest of us hadn't gotten sick yet so we could more easily understand John's gluttony.

The Parador Chefchaouen was probably the best hotel we stayed at during our seminar; the only other one that comes closest is the Volubilis Inn. I enjoyed the breakfasts at the Parador because the waiters were so polite and gracious and the ambience so European. The Volubilis Inn's swimming pool was more aesthetically pleasing but it was also more crowded and noisy; the Parador's pool was small and simple and refreshing in both a physical and spiritual sense. I loved floating on my back and gazing up at the mountaintops. My spirit soared during these moments of total tranquility -- I guess these episodes fit into the category of out-of-body experiences. I remember a similar feeling when I was relaxing in the hot springs in Orea, Colorado. Beautiful memories-I wish I had taken advantage of this option as much as Jerry S. did. I wonder if any local poet has tried to capture the powerful charm of these mountains and the way of life they inspire.

Our first morning in Chefchaouen consisted of two lectures. Si Ali delivered the initial presentation. I honestly don't remember much of what he said. I do remember feeling comfortable and cool in his large upstairs salon though, and I do remember feeling impressed by Mary's translation of his words. However, I don't recall the content of his speech because I got side-tracked so many times when he ran out to change a diaper or wipe a runny nose or play Dad to the kids in his house. In all his attempts to juggle responsibilities Si Ali reminds me of that Stephen Leacock character who jumps on his horse and rides off in every direction at the same time.

In contrast, Helen Boyle's presentation will remain fresh in my mind for a long time. I enjoyed learning about the two types of Koranic schools that she studied: The *messids* that follow a traditional approach and the *kutebs* that integrate traditional instruction with modern preschool philosophies. Significantly, the kutebs employed female teachers, stressed practical skills, and utilized chanting as a technique for memorizing the Koran. Moreover, I appreciate the opportunity she gave us to visit two of the Koranic schools that she used in her research study. I regret forgetting my video camera for these visits because I missed some great pictures and sounds. Nonetheless, I can clearly recall in my mind's eye the smiles and pride of these young students as they sang Koranic verses for us. They transformed the Koran into music; it was a beautiful scene.

As she did the evening before, Elizabeth led our group into interaction with the children. The kids instantly warmed up to her and then to the rest of us. I'll always remember Elizabeth's special gift for bringing kids out of their shyness and getting them to giggle and play.

I ate lunch at a shaded outdoor cafe in the Town Square, just across from the only octagonal minaret in Morocco. John, Peter, and Tim joined me. Peter and Tim were still ill but they made the most of this gorgeous day. We joked and laughed about our language lessons in Fez and their usefulness to our negotiations with merchants here in Chefchaouen.

We finally figured out what was safe to eat and then just sat back to absorb the patterns of life that passed through the square while our food was being prepared. John pointed out the bearded old man dressed in classical desert garb who walked around the square all day and then spent the night sleeping on a stone bench next to the mosque. He reminded John of some of the senior citizens who add local color to small towns throughout Appalachia. Tim commented on the singular loveliness of the tree that functioned as the square's centerpiece. He had just finished reading an article of deforestation in the International Times. And Peter questioned the ability of the sidewalk sellers to earn much; he surmised that they probably sold their wares more for the socializing aspect of the situation than the money. We enjoyed our food and our sampling of life and nature in the Chefchaouen square.

After lunch Peter, John, and I hiked up to the mosque ruins. This trek was my second visit to the ruins today, but my first visit in the middle of the day. Chefchaouen is lovely at any time of the day. On our return I decided to head up into the mountains. I followed a young Berber man who was leading a pack-laden donkey up a steep trail that snaked its way up between the two mountains that serve as backdrop for Chefchaouen. I climbed past the point where I could see any of the city's white and blue buildings. I became concerned when this Berber kid started talking with voices somewhere in the rocks. I wondered if he were leading me into a trap; I guess this worry exposes the fears that naturally come from growing up in a big city like Chicago. So, I fell back, let him disappear, and looked for a way to cross over to the other mountain where I saw another trail just below the summit.

To make a long story short, I followed this new trail back toward Chefchaouen and on the way discovered many exciting vista views of the valleys and towns in the area. When I returned to the Parador I found Faris and Nabil enjoying the pool and Jerry Singer basking in the sun. They inspired me; I swam for at least a half-hour, sun tanned for another five minutes, and afterwards I felt totally refreshed and adequately prepared to celebrate the eve of the Prophet's Birthday with Si Ali and company.

I bumped into Lurana laden with packages in the hotel hallway. She was returning from one of her shopping sojourns and looked particularly triumphant and brilliant. She showed me her kaftan and purse and dolls and other things. I really regret not taking video of the loot that certain consumer-minded Fulbrighters had amassed during our five weeks in Morocco. I think everyone guessed that Dinker had purchased the greatest amount, but I think that Lurana and Mick both qualify as challengers for the title of "Champion Shopper of the Seminar." Some video of the contestants' goods would have allowed each of us the opportunity to judge for ourselves who deserved the title.

Speaking of awards, I think that Ajile deserves recognition for the number of different outfits that she wore during our seminar. After a couple of days I found myself wondering when she would repeat an outfit. Well, by the twelfth day she had not repeated. And on each day Ajile was indeed a lovely vision to behold. She was simply magnificent.

After having dinner in the Town Square with John, Peter, and Tim, I dressed respectfully in my sports coat for the evening. Si Ali thought he could use his influence to slip us into the back of a mosque so we could witness the ceremonies surrounding the Prophet's Birthday. The girls were to enter from one door and the boys from another. The boys waited for their turn behind the mosque by the entrance to Si Ali's house. While marking time, Aaron almost chain-smoked, and Mick and Dinker told about their great shopping experiences and conquests. All three were pleased that the money they had spent buying blankets would be used to launch a young shopkeeper into married life. We had waited for about an hour when word came that Si Ali could not swing his plan. We salvaged the night by following Helen Boyle's two male assistants to a coffee shop near the main post office. We listened to American rock and roll music and talked about how great life was in Chefchaouen until the shop closed.

Later the next day we learned that the girls who had been admitted to the mosque were crowded and uncomfortable during the service. I guess the boys lucked out.

DAY 14: TUESDAY, JULY 7 -- CHEFCHAOUEN
ELIZABETH MOOSE

This day begins late the night before with a women-only celebration of music at Ali Raissouni's house (in honor of the Prophet's birthday?). The men, meanwhile, also at Si Ali's invitation, head to the mosque for a men-only ceremony. Several of us doubt that they'll be let in, even with Si Ali's

---

influence, and we're right -- they're not admitted. But here at Si Ali's, we women are allowed upstairs to watch the spectacle about to unfold in the main courtyard below. We sit on long wooden benches and gaze through the slats of the banister as women gather to begin drumming and singing.

On the walk over here, I chafed at the demand that we cover our heads. Even though I brought a headscarf just for an occasion like this, I don't like having to wear it. Inside I rail: Why can't my hair be free? Why is a woman bareheaded disrespectful? Is there something about being a woman I should feel ashamed of? A small but significant gap in my understanding of what being a woman in this culture means.

But now on the balcony, as more and more women arrive, my irritation fades. I peer down at Fatima and Ajile, who, as Muslims, are permitted in the main courtyard, but Ajile looks so lonesome sitting there in the corner by herself that I have to stifle the impulse to yell, "Hey, Ajile, come on up here with us!" After all, this ain't a basketball game. But I do love how crowded this balcony is becoming. Behind us, women press close against our backs, not restricted, thank god, by Western taboos against invading "personal space." The sacredness of human touch. Everyone's greedy for a look -- me, too, and as I look over my shoulder in the dim light I catch a glint of someone's gold filling only inches from my nose (or do I only imagine this?). Maybe it's the smile of expectation I see, which only seems to gleam. Some of the girls from the henna party and Andalusian music concert of two nights ago are sitting over there to our left. I wave, and they elbow each other, giggling, and wave back.

Ten-thirty . . . eleven . . . heading towards midnight, and things aren't really underway yet, but then we're not on Eastern Daylight Time anymore, either. Most, if not all, of us poop out -- and we slip down the stairs to head back to the hotel -- leaving our benches to the women sitting behind us. They fill the spaces so quickly that it seems as if we've never even been there.

Middle of the night: A two (three?) hour phone call to a friend. Much talk about EVERYthing. When the phone bill arrives in August, it will be astronomical. And worth every penny.

Morning: Session with Mohammed Abu Talib on Morocco as portrayed in literature by non-Moroccans at his newly-named country home, "The Place Difficult to Achieve" or "A Garden with Accommodation." Si Mohammed welcomes us to his sitting room, invites us to browse among the books on Morocco by non-Moroccans he's set out for us (there are piles everywhere). He laments that too often at cultural and educational exchange events of this sort, real dialogue doesn't happen, and he asks us to introduce ourselves, tell what and where we teach. A simple, lovely turquoise lamp sits on a table nearby. Outside the high windows at the end of this long room, there is the sound of rushing water, birds chirping, and children playing. When my turn at introduction comes, I say I teach American and Western literature. "Who's your favorite American writer?" Si Mohammed asks, kindly, I think, but when I answer, "Tennessee Williams," I realized I've said the wrong thing. "Did you read his Memoirs?" he asks, almost like an accusation, and then launches into a brief excoriation of "homos, lesbians" and the "Tangier School of Translation." "Enough Paul Bowles!" he exclaims as the artist who is also a guest today in this Garden with Accommodation explains that Bowles is "not our cup of tea" because of his limited picture of Morocco.

After Si Mohammed praises the wisdom of Moroccan proverbs, clarifies the myth that Islam forbids painting (it really, he says, forbids only the depiction of some idol, not human representation -- why Scorsese's Last Temptation of Christ, filmed at Volubilis, was "unacceptable"), and criticizes friend Fatima Mernissi's use of eight co-wives in Dreams of Trespass as exaggeration and misrepresentation, we all go out onto the patio for juice, tea, lovely little cakes, and nuts. A few steps down from patio level, an empty swimming pool waits to be filled for the summer. Si

Mohammed seems eager not take up too much of our time, so soon he ushers us back inside for his final remarks. But before I put down my juice glass, I ask him if he might share with us one of his poems (earlier he mentioned that he had published some poetry). "We'll see," he says, smiling.

Back in the living room, Si Mohammed has realized that Fatima was once one of his students, and now he rejoices in this unexpected reunion. Expansive, he pulls a book from the shelf and reads aloud one of his own poems -- an early one, he tells us, written in the 1960s when he was a student in the U.S. The poem dramatizes the prejudice a young black man encounters when he calls a white woman to inquire about renting a room, and it sounds almost exactly like a poem I know I've read before. Funny, though, neither Ann nor I remember Si Mohammed as its author. Our jaws drop. But original or shamelessly appropriated, the poem is Si Mohammed's not-so-subtle reminder (lest we, in our American smugness, forget) that prejudice and intolerance are alive and well in America. Ahem. We get the point. The dialogue is over. We emerge from The Place Difficult to Achieve into the sunlight for a group photo. (Smile.)

Evening: Near dusk, I buy a Herald-Tribune and a paper cone of peanuts, then take a walk by myself along the street which runs in front of the Chefchaouen post office. There's a carnival feel -- lots of tiny white lights twinkling, flags flying -- for the King's birthday -- and lots of people out strolling. Suddenly I feel a stab of self-consciousness and loneliness: I realize everyone else is walking with someone and that I am alone. I slow my walk, trying to still my racing heart, but I can't silence the old fears which swarm up in my head about needing to love and be loved, the old doubts about my ability to be independent. Funny, I hadn't felt this in a while, not, at least, on this trip. Such an old, old feeling -- as old as my childhood. Always wanting to be brave and strong and fearing that I'm not. But hadn't I mostly made peace with all that? Why the feeling now? Slowly, like a woman in leg irons, I walk through the village and back towards the hotel. The sky has darkened to that indigo that hurts it's so beautiful. I tell myself I'll go up and read, to prove to myself that I can be alone.

But then a funny thing happens: here come some of the "boys" -- Aaron, Jacob, Jerry S., and someone else, I think -- is it Peter? Some hugs and punches. "Hey, woman," says Jacob. "You eaten yet?" somebody asks. "We were just going -- come with us." And lo and behold I do, stepping out of my loneliness and into the light of these friends. And even though the road to the restaurant goes down, I have the feeling that we're walking up high.

DAY 15: WEDNESDAY, JULY 8 -- CHEFCHAOUEN
TIM "DAKOTA" "HELWA" SCHORN

I have recovered from the French or Spanish or Moroccan revenge and am ready to tackle the free day by sitting on the balcony of the Hotel Parador by reading a spy novel. I figure if I read the book I won't have to wait for the movie (Aaron).

The peace found in these mountains presents a terrific opportunity to sit and soak in the fresh air and solitude. Thomas Merton would have been at home here. Even a 20th century Trappist monk would have been content at the Parador, looking up at the mosque perched on the hill. As a poet and mystic Merton would have appreciated this bastion of Sufism. One has to believe that Merton was both Catholic and Sufi.

Traveling from Fes to Chefchaouen is like going from New York to the Black Hills of South Dakota, a place where you get to know the moon, stars and crisp air. Though in South Dakota you may not get the braying donkey, muezzin, and cat fights (and I mean actual cats here) that one experiences at the Parador. While many of the group chose to go through Morocco's "Grand Canyon," which by all accounts was absolutely spectacular, on their way to the beach, I stayed back to tackle souvenir shopping for my sisters, nieces, goddaughter, and favorite one year old.

Walking through the plaza allows me to see the women in their colorful hats (that look a bit like the tajine dish), and equally colorful scarves, skirts, and shawls. I've never been to the Andes but the idea that these people would be very similar to the mountain-living Peruvians sticks with me throughout our time here. At the end of the shopping day I realize I have succumbed to purchasing the full-length cotton shirts for half of South Dakota. I also threw in a blanket, place mat, multi-purpose wrap, and wall hanging of Chefchaouen from the neighborhood loom. Thanks to Aaron, Mick, Jerry, me, and probably others, one young Moroccan will be able to provide his bride-to-be with fine jewelry and probably early retirement for himself.

The evening provided what Aaron termed public intellectual masturbation. I guess it was the Pee Wee Herman/Paul Rubens-movie-theater of farewell ceremonies. The problem with not being able to speak with the locals is that we have to take some speakers' word for it that they are as important and influential as they claim to be.

Mick and Ann provided the group's response and thanks. Every utterance emanating from Ann seems to have a hand-crafted quality that you find in Fessi pottery. Daoud and Ajile provided Koranic recitations. The fact that Ajile admitted that the three verses she recited from memory happened to be either the shortest or all-encompassing of the verses compelled a couple of us to ask her if she actually knew any more of the Koran by heart or if she had just committed those three to memory since they fit every occasion. (Sadly, Ajile would leave us early because of a tragic death in her family. Her quiet presence was greatly missed by us all.)

DAY 16: THURSDAY, JULY 9 – CHEFCHAOUEN, FES

LURANA AMIS

The "public holiday" made me choose this day to record, expecting festivities galore to commemorate His Majesty's Birthday. I'd imagined parades, songs, cannons, confetti and fireworks to welcome us back to Fes. Reader, you will commiserate with me when I say I saw no sign of festivity – a surprise considering how ubiquitous His Majesty's royal image is and how frequently his name is invoked.

So, to start off in Chaouen, the day of our departure. The town had seemed to be up late yesterday (a pre-celebration or was it for the Feast of Children I heard mentioned)? My morning involved packing (more) and (more) shopping – dolls made of cork – a man and a woman. I resisted a three-doll portrayal of a circumcision and already regret my self-control. (I showed Jerry K and he was shaken/shocked. How could I have resisted?)

We climbed in our loyal bus, bags heavier and purses lighter. This time the drive was down-up to down, higher to lower. En route we stopped at a glimpse of farmers' (?) dancing. I confess to a fall (#2 of 3), skidding foolishly on pebbles at road's edge. Result: a bloody, well-skinned and sore knee. The dance was short and not very noteworthy. On the way back to the bus, while Jerry K kindly offered me a supporting arm, poor Faris crashed into some low and cunningly placed barbed wire. The result: a leg much worse than my knee. On the bus, ministrations of antiseptic (Mary's), iodine (Fatima's), cool towel (mine), and candy (ditto) to console the poor lad, now doomed to a tetanus shot in Fes (editorial note: given in stomach – how weird!)

[Editorial note: above editorial note is Lurana's own.]

And so to Fes and the Grand Hotel. Jacob's and Jerry K's room had a true "throne" up steps in the bathroom; I vanquished a gigantic bug with insecticide spray while Mary talked of larger, more ferocious, Florida insects. And we repacked, as usual, this time small bags for our homestays which begin tomorrow morning at ALIF where we learn with whom we shall be. Slight to great apprehension seems to be common to us all. What shall we do without Mommie Fatima for three days? (I am hoping, hoping to be with Fatima Rabai! Later note: I was!! And it was fine!!)

DAY 16: THURSDAY, JULY 9 – CHEFCHAOUEN, FES

MICK LEWIS

Near midnight, on the preceding evening, Aaron and I walked through the exposition of local crafts in the Kasbah. We met Said at his loom. He was the older brother of Abdelkader, a young merchant we had befriended during the days in Chaouen. Both Aaron and I had bought several unusual textile items from Abdelkader (including night scenes of the town), and both of us had been bewitched by his lovely fiancee, Iman, whose smile postponed the onset of night. We exchanged pleasantries with Said and his friends, and they all laughed when I responded to Aaron's antics by saying he was "majnun." We also met Elizabeth and Jacob, who were making their own rounds through the exhibit. Jacob had just purchased an extraordinary birdcage, and I was surprised when Aaron did NOT make the obvious cinematic reference to it: La Cage aux Folles!

In the morning there were numerous comments on the "entertainment" of the night before. Professor Abu Talib and Si Ali Raissouni vying to outdo one another and largely ignoring us. I still had visions of our host rolling large tables into the room as the filming ended and of the bread and honey placed on them; cheese attended the bread and honey only at the table of the big cheeses. Tim expressed regret that he didn't add Pig Latin to the general Babel.

In a last paroxysm of consumerism, several of us entered a five story house that had been a mercantile establishment for twenty-two years. While we were having mint tea, Alba walked in with a new leather bag to accommodate her marvelous "Jewish Berber" carpet. We were sealing our smaller bargains with the master of the house.

One or two incidents and numerous rural scenes punctuated the return bus trip from Chefchaouen to Fez. It was heating up all the while, and I was sweating on the bus, smearing the notes I was taking.

We stopped at a village along the roadside to see a spontaneous performance in celebration of the king's birthday. One man played a drum, two the ghaita, a recorder-like instrument, though double-reeded. Men danced while other men surrounded them; the women, many of them clad in red and white striped Berber cloth, stood at a watchful distance. One of the performers asked us for money, but other locals chided him for doing so. The scramble to see the performance was not without costs: Lurana slipped on stones and acquired a nasty abrasion, and Faris cut his leg on a barbed fence.

At some point we stopped to water and sewer ourselves. Over soft drinks Aaron proposed a sidetrip to Essaouira with Jerry S. and others piping in support. Fatima conceded that it is a very special place, but she also remembered Carl's planning: he had, she said, put the big hitters at the end of the program. Aaron responded with his usual aplomb: "So, who were those chickenshits at the front end of the agenda?"

Along the way I saw the black tents of transhumant nomads, their "houses made of hair" situated across the road from modern electrical towers. Occasional lakes flashed bright green or blue through the Middle Atlas. Boys played soccer in freshly mown wheat fields. Animals dotted the landscape, goats, egrets, cows, sheep, occasional mules thrown together without thought to species and breed. Lining the road at points were arcades of trees with whitewashed trunks. More than once there appeared on hillsides in outsized Arabic script the words "God, Country, King."

Around me in the bus, my colleagues were engaged in a variety of activities, many of them a part of their individual patterns. Elizabeth, already in a world of her own still to come, listened to tapes of Greek music. Jerry S. was sleeping again, a remarkable feat in this vehicle. Alba was trying to read and was nodding off. Jerry K. and Ann animatedly discussed the use of films in the classroom.

As we reentered Fez, Fatima noted quickly that our homestays were not yet fully worked out, and, as usual, her remarks failed to reach the ears of the boys at the back of the bus.

During dinner at Casa Nostra with Tim, Dinker, John, Peter, Jacob, Betty, Mary, and Jerry K., the talk, tinged by trepidation, turned to homestays, set to begin the next day.

FES HOMESTAY
DAYS 17-19: FRIDAY - SUNDAY, JULY 10-12

AJILE AMATULLAH-RAHMAN

It's Friday, July 10th and today we begin our homestay in Fes. The purpose of this weekend visit is to get an insider's view of what life is like for a Fassi family. I am waiting in the hotel lobby to be told who I will be assigned to, all the while making *du'a* that Allah (God) will put me with someone whom I will be a blessing to and they will be a blessing to me. I am praying this when lo! and behold! I find that I, along with Lurana Amis have been paired together and that our hostess is Fatima Rabai.

Fatima is a professor at the local University where she teaches French and Arabic. She has accompanied our group on several previous excursions around the city and was kind enough to take Fatima and I to the Qarawiyyin mosque for Jumah.

Madame Rabai is a petite Moroccan woman with a big heart and an even larger zest for life. I look forward to spending time with her. Lurana, who teaches French and can act as interpreter, is more gregarious than I am and will make a good counterbalance to me -- an eastern woman coming from a western world.

We jumped into Fatima's car and sped off to her house. It is a beautiful home with well appointed furnishings, opulent ceilings and floors, and a feeling of down-home welcome when you walk in.

She has a maid, a beautiful street waif, whom she took in and is training to be a good housekeeper and sending her to classes to learn a marketable skill, too. On an outward level, some may not regard Lady Fatima as religious because she may not observe all the obvious Islamic protocol in terms of dress, movement, etc. However, I tend to look inward and instinctively felt that she was a good person and that counts a lot with me. Fatima did not disappoint me and, while she may not appear to be overly religious, she is certainly spiritual. And funny, too.

Madame Robai talked very freely and quite frankly about Moroccan society -- both as a woman and as a Muslim. Her insight was honest, balanced, and heart-felt. She brought over several friends of hers and we had tea together. Again, I was privy to a side of Moroccan life that I'm sure many foreigners don't have access to.

Fatima's husband, Abdul Kareem, was educated in France and teaches electronics at the university, too. He is a liberated man with a sense of humor and civic responsibility almost equal to his love and respect for his wife. One evening, we three ladies attended a talk of the contemporary experience of Moroccan Jews, and afterward hung out at a very chic Moroccan sidewalk cafe. We ate sweets and drank cool drinks until well after midnight. When we returned home, Fatima's husband had videotaped a program for them to watch called "How to Love a Moroccan Woman." So much for the theory of the oppressed, Moroccan woman. While their relationship may not be the rule, it is a marvelous exception.

In addition to my hostess offering me the most beautiful bedroom in the house, the master bedroom, which I politely but firmly refused, she had wonderful meals prepared; took us on walks through the neighborhood and introduced us to her neighbors. I went with her to a local neighborhood mosque for Friday congregational prayers. We also visited her husband's place of business, where he repairs electronic equipment and also trains young Moroccans who are educated, but can't find jobs, in a skill to make a living. They both demonstrated an aspect of civil society that our lecturers talked about.

I told her I wanted to go shopping, so the next day we went to the medina and she bargained for me where I got great treasures at a fair price. My greatest, and most prized possession, was a set of framed pieces of art that had the names Allah on one and Muhammad on the other. While in the Medina, Fatima took me to the Qarawiyyin library and banged on the doors for them to let me in, but alas, the library was closed. That was my greatest disappointment during my stay in Fes. It is said that Allah never takes something from you without giving you something better. And that's true -- he gave me a weekend visit with Fatima Robai instead.

AARON BRAUN

After breakfast, Jacob and I are picked up by an elderly Jewish woman who seems somewhat uptight. Najia confirms this with her quizzical remark "call me if it doesn't work out." En route to her home, Jacob has trouble understanding her Moroccan Arabic dialect and her Hebrew is minimal. She nearly crashes twice, once catapulting Jacob into the sun visor. This woman is MOST DEFINITELY UPTIGHT!

Arriving at her villa, we are pleased to discover that she has modern plumbing, but all is still not well. She takes us over to the Jewish community center [where the following night the Fulbrighters convene to listen to Fatima courageously attempt to translate for the arrogant Dr. Guigui], and introduces us to a relative in charge of the place. His Hebrew is fluent and he expresses a bemused shock at our predicament, suggesting the union is both ill timed and ill advised, as our presence in her home would be inappropriate since she has just recently been widowed. Neither Jacob nor I had any thoughts of pouncing on this embittered wench, so this suggestion floors the hell out of me. I rather embrace the second suggestion that we take leave because she's expecting other guests, that we would invariably cause her to take a hotel room if we stayed... We return to her home, pick up our bags, and return to the ALIF center where Najia and Elizabeth have yet to leave.

Fatima joins Elizabeth, Jacob and I on the 15-minute ride to Najia's, where we are feted by her mother and sister and entertained by her 5 year old cousin. We discover that there is yet another houseguest, a Dutch woman named Susan, who seems overwrought when I comment on the orgasmic nature of a particularly juicy red plum.

That night, Jacob and I cannot sleep. We talk of life, love and laments. Jacob finally falls asleep just before the 3am loudspeakers go off nearby. They don't seem to disturb him, but I realize the futility of my attempts at sleep for the entirety of the 45 minute harangue. At 4am, I go in to the bathroom and struggle with the Turkish plumbing. At 5:30, I take a shower, praying it will allow me to finally sleep. It does. For an hour and a half.

Three cups of coffee arm me for the morning souq walk with Najile, my 'roomies,' and Mick and the Dink, who rendezvous with us under a gate. It is, despite my exhaustion, the best souq tour of the trip, as we are entirely in charge of ourselves, with nary a deadline or destination pressuring this avid group of shoppers.

Having decided not to go through another night like the last, I ask Najia if her mother would understand, and not be insulted, if I would return to the Grand Hotel for the remaining two nights of the homestay. Thankfully, she nods her head, reminding me that there's a tea scheduled for Sunday at 5 P.M. at her home.

The two nights of this Grand Hotel stay are ideally timed, as Fes suffers through a 44-degree centigrade heat wave on Sunday... I watch the final game of the World Cup, which France wins over my beloved Brazilleros, swathed in air-conditioned splendor...

A note about Fulbright activities this weekend:

Friday night's laser-light show on a hilltop overlooking the Fes medina is a technologically inept bust, but a quizzical marvel of clashing aesthetics, the modernity of laser tech over an ancient landscape is just too much! John and I horse around during this display, seated as far from Jerry Singer as possible, as he has already volunteered some 4 or 5 of my cigarettes to his chain-smoking homestay host... I was on a budget, Jerry - did you not consider buying him a pack?

Before returning to our respective homestays, Lady Fatima procures some of us some towels, a rare commodity [along with toilet tissue - Elizabeth buys some three or four packs of tissues for her weekend...]. Thanks, Fatima...you don't know how close I was to ripping off the men's room towel at the Son et Lumiere!

Saturday night's talk on "The History and Contemporary Experience of Moroccan Jews" is yet another in a series of over-long ho-hummers. Dr Armand Guigui experiences some early microphone woes, gets antsy, and proceeds to alter his intended presentation by chucking some pages of his speech...much to the chagrin of the hard-working Lady Fatima, yet again translating from Frog to English... What adds to her woes, quite unexpectedly, and from a curious source, is Daoud's emphatic correction of a particular passage of her translation. Looking around the room and the audience, I notice other perplexed and somewhat concerned Fulbrighters.

This presentation is punctuated by the arrivals of both an Israeli attaché and his wife [with bodyguard], two head Rabbis, one Moroccan, the other Belgian, AND the musical chairs their arrival precipitates. Lurana motions poor Pete to get up and give his seat to one of the aforementioned Rabbis. Pete, experiencing persistent medical woes, does so dutifully, but I can see by his fevered brow that he is at wits' end.

During the Q/A session, I am standing next to Lurana, who is avidly poring through her notes, seemingly contemplating a question to offer Dr Guigui... I don't know what comes over me, but I lean down and hiss "Don't even think about it, Lurana!" [I apologize, Lurana -- it was the heat!]

Following Jacob's parting words [and my less than exact translation of the Hebrew into English], the evening is finally over... The only question in my mind is, have Faris and Nabil scored? All during the evening, these two beloved young men were hanging out in the outer courtyard amidst some nubile young Moroccan Jewesses, embroiled in a Q/A session of their own...

On the bus, Daoud offers us another stipend envelope... Hell, we're solvent again!

Sunday's tea at Najia's, amidst the heat wave, is splendid but trying. Elizabeth enjoys the visit of four female guests, finally getting a sense of the feminine perspective. Pete and Jerry K, both ailing, arrive after their host car breaks down en route and they're forced to trek through the heat. Betty, Jacob and I take turns in front of the floor fan by the door. It is stiflingly hot! Najia's mom is so incredibly sweet and earthy - just hanging around her nearly provides relief from the heat. After I return to the Grand, the tea party moves elsewhere and I'm told a grand time was had by nearly all.

JOHN CABE

My homestay was mostly very positive with the exception of the "ugly American" who showed up (to be explained). The make-up of my household was the elderly woman who owned the house (the house was modest but very comfortable, with my own room, fan, western toilet, etc.), her daughter, and the daughter's two children, age two and four, and a thirteen year old niece who was living there for the summer. Everyone, including the children, spoke or understood English except the grandmother. Saida, the mother, met me at the Language Institute and we walked to the market to get food for the weekend, especially for the cous-cous for that day. We got a cab to where she lived on the outskirts of Fes.

On arriving, I learned that the grandmother had knee surgery a few days previously and was having some difficulty getting around. Also, she had just had her feet and hands hennaed. I helped Saida fix the cous-cous and about the time it was ready, a fellow by the name of Jamal showed up. He was an American who had been in Morocco for about three months and was living in the Medina (he stayed day and night where I was staying so I am not sure how much time he spent in his own place). He supposedly was studying Moroccan music, but seemed to be an expert on everything Moroccan in his short time there. Saida apparently thought I would be more at ease with an American there, but it actually made me more uncomfortable.

I did get to spend some direct time with the niece, Zenib, and her grandmother. The grandmother came from an old, prominent Berber family and had a wealth of information had there been the opportunity to talk more with her. When her husband died, she moved out of the Medina and worked four jobs to send all five of her children to school. She had a tattoo on her neck, which had been put there to remove a goiter, and there was no goiter. Anyway, on Saturday, I spent the day with Saida and Jamal in the Medina. It was not so crowded and more interesting than being rushed through it as we had been. We wandered around many, many streets, visited a poor family and, of course, they made us stay for tea, bread, and some tomato dip. I was told they were very poor, and thus did not feel good about eating the food, but they insisted so I just tasted a little and drank the tea.

On Sunday, Saida and I walked to the market about a mile or so away to buy food. It was quite a site. There were hundreds of food and clothing stalls. I took a few pictures and that made everyone want to have their's taken, but they did not want money; they were excited about getting their picture taken. Saida told me the huge piles of clothes were sent from various countries to Spain and then to Morocco but that they were supposed to be distributed to the poor. Instead, the clothes were sold to Moroccans who then sold the clothes in the market. It was incredibly hot that day so we caught a taxi back home. Grandmother had been cooking that day even though she was somewhat incapacitated, since she said her daughter really could not cook very well!

It was a very interesting and rewarding stay in spite of my being uncomfortable with the other American there. Saida is well educated with an M.A. in International Relations but unable to find a job. She had been married to a Greek man but they were separated. The niece, Zenib, was very smart and I really enjoyed talking to her. Her English was exceptionally good. She said it was unusual for an adult to talk to teenagers or ask them their opinions about things as I had done. Overall, it was one of the better parts of the project for me.

ALBA DE LEON

Just a note on my homestay visit. I had a wonderful time eating organic peaches from Meknes, sugar-free mint tea, many different types of breakfast breads and healthy dinners. We visited Meknes and had a wonderful cous cous lunch, a nice long nap followed by...

[Editorial note: As the adage has it, 'that's all she wrote,' until asked about the discrepancy, to which she responded with the following:]

"I got your phone call. Who knows what happens when one tries to send you e-mail. Is it you or is it me? But let's get to the topic at hand, the homestay journal entry. Here is a new paragraph for the journal. By the way, will you be sending a copy of this journal to me? What is the cost?"

...I stayed with Mary at the home of our former language instructor and had the best time. Both of our hosts were educators and had adopted a very western style of life. We shared intense and important conversations about issues that concerned us; we had the best meals with organic peaches, homemade cous cous and fresh meat. We visited Meknes and got to see yet another town and we helped their son get ready for his job in the U.S. as an employee of Disney in Florida. My homestay was a welcome relief from the conditions of our trip and one of the highlights of my stay in Morocco.

"Aaron correct the spelling please, I'm in rush got to go to Mexico."

[Editorial note: Having dutifully corrected the spelling, Albs, I hope you don't mind my including the italicized non-journal e-mail text, as I think the readers would warmly embrace it as a distinctly appropriate evocation of their beloved New Mexican travel associate.]

ANN FEY

My homestay is an opportunity to know a family, a neighborhood, a bit of a way of life. In the Mellah, I walk, talk, watch television, eat, laugh, read and write with a lovely group of people. There are many memorable moments: hearing the grandmother, Lala Zhara, reminiscing about the freshness of the seafood she would prepare elaborately for her French employers years ago; Khalid and his brother Said trying on the new sneakers their mother brought home from the market; the son scrubbing the tile-patterned vinyl floor.

I remember standing on the roof in a jumble of clothes lines to see the Jewish cemetery; seeing Khalid's best trousers pressed so he could join us at the Sound and Light show; having the nicest little piece of chicken pushed around the common serving plate in my direction; hearing about how the videos of the student marches at the university seemed to disappear; watching an Egyptian soap opera with background character sketches provided by a great fan; watching the soccer game with equally great fans who rooted for France because - among other reasons - the official was a Moroccan, and who regretted the scoring of that third point because Brazil didn't deserve the indignity.

There was the English lesson, the little girl who lived upstairs, the sweetest fragrance of the chunk of soap on the tiniest sink, the bright red curtains that gave the intruder sun no chance at all. There must be hundreds of things I remember.

BETTY LAU

Homestay Highlights: Munching Through Morocco Postscript

My homestay gift settled an argument my host was having with some buddies at the local café. The argument: Do vacuum packed foods still need to be refrigerated? They had debated this point for many weeks, and my arrival with the answer caused quite a stir in the household. The gift: a box of vacuum packed smoked salmon, a specialty of the Pacific Northwest. He eagerly quizzed me, "Are you sure this doesn't need refrigeration?"

"Of course I'm sure; see, it says right here, 'No refrigeration necessary until package is opened." He triumphantly held the box aloft, proclaiming, "I must show this to my friends!"

I suggested it might be more fun to invite the skeptics over for a tea party with the boxed salmon as the piece de resistance of the hors d'oeuvres. He carefully stashed the box in a cupboard while mulling over the best way to get the maximum mileage from the salmon.

On Sunday, I witnessed a domestic argument. The husband began shouting at the wife as she and I and their child were heading out the door. The wife appeared to be holding her own. Embarrassed, I went out into the stairwell with the child. Even going down two flights, I could still hear the yelling. We walked down to the street level.

The wife rejoined us and I asked if she were alright. She replied she had only asked him to pay the electric bill on his way to work the next day. He refused on the grounds that it would make him late for work. Evidently, leaving for work a few minutes early was not an option.

We three walked to the medina to find a traditional Moroccan teapot for my sister the tea connoisseur. While there, I was greeted with the familiar flurries of "Konichiwa!" and "Sayonara! Sayonara!" They must not see very many Chinese Americans. In self defense, I replied, "Ni hao, ni hao" (hello, hello in Mandarin), hoping that they'd say it to the next group of Japanese tourists they saw. Our next visit was to the Jewish Cemetary, where my homestay hostess and her child were not allowed to enter. I asked, but the caretaker said Muslims could not enter. The caretaker was Muslim, so I didn't understand why they couldn't come in. I wished I had better French.

We met up with the husband for lunch, my treat. We adults had lamb cutlets while their daughter had the kebab variety. Lunch for all four of us was tasty and inexpensive. The Ambassador Café was near their home so we got to walk off our meal.

At 5:00 we visited Najia's, where Jacob was staying. Najia had invited us all for a tea party. From there we went to Jerry K's, Tim's and Peter's homestay. I was impressed by a late 30s something couple who owned a weight lifting gym. The husband taught weight lifting and the wife taught aerobics. Lots of jokes about the weights of the women present flew round; and to demonstrate how slim and supple his wife still was, the weight lifter pulled off his jelaba (revealing a muscled body in black pants and tank top), danced a few steps with his wife, and flipped her backwards over his forearm. Amazing, considering she was wearing black spiked heels, black tights and a black spaghetti strap corset.

Returning late, I asked my hostess if her husband had eaten, and sure enough he hadn't. She explained that no matter how hungry he got, he would not eat unless she cooked or warmed up the meal and served it to him. Since it was 11:30, I marveled at how long he had waited for supper. If he were an American husband, he'd starve to death.

DINKER PATEL

The high point of the Morocco experience was the homestay. Dinker Patel and Mick Lewis, both from Kentucky were hosted by the Berrada family. Mr. Hassan Berrada is a retired postal worker. Hassan, his wife Khadija, and son Aziz, live in a three-story modern stone house in a suburban residential area of Fes. Louides Alvarez, an American scholar studying Arabic at the American Language Institute has found accommodation with the Berrada family.

Mick and I enjoyed the warm hospitality extended by the Berradas. Hassan took us to the neighborhood Hamam – steam bath. We sweated, were scrubbed down, rigorously massaged, and doused with endless buckets of hot and cold water. We were told that the hamams often have a religious significance as part of the Islamic tradition of cleanliness and ablutions. Khadija deserves our appreciation for the most appetizing harira, cous cous, tagine, malawi, cactus pear, assorted desserts, and mint tea she graciously served during our homestay. We hope to meet the Berradas and other Moroccans we got to know in the future. Inshallah.

DAY 20: MONDAY, JULY 13 -- FES, IFRANE, KHENIFRA

AJILE AMATULLAH-RAHMAN

We've completed our homestay in Fes and we are en route to Ifrane, the location of Al Akhawayn University, which is Morocco's answer to the American universities in Cairo and Beirut. Al Akhwayn was founded by Hassan II and the king of Saudi Arabia in order to provide a western-style education in an eastern setting.

The trip to Ifrane took approximately two hours from Fes and was a nice shift from homestay to homeschooling. Some participants discussed their weekend experiences, while others nodded or slept on the way.

We arrived in Ifrane, a resort-type town, and were taken on a tour of the university facilities. The buildings were modern, but austere compared to the institutions we were used to seeing in other areas of Morocco. To me, they seemed out of place and out of sync with the ethos of our host country. Swiss-style buildings in an Afro-Mediterranean setting?

We were welcomed warmly by our host and were taken on a tour of the facilities. My favorite part of the tour was the library. It was wonderfully constructed, although it did have a strong cedar smell. Naturally so, when the ceiling was carved out of cedar wood. The library catalog was on-line and you could tell that we were educators because we immediately began looking for books and journals. I, too, searched and was pleased to find a large number of African American books, journals, and magazines, including the ubiquitous "Ebony." I had one of our junior tour guides and personal protectors, Nabil, to take my photo holding said magazine. I wanted my students back

home to see that continental Africans do read and study about diasporic ones, too. In addition, I was wearing a jelaba, the traditional Moroccan dress, so the photo of the magazine and I made a nice statement on African unity.

After the tour, we were given an overview of the university by Dr. Moncef Lahlou who is Acting Dean of Social Sciences and Humanities. He discussed the history, mission statement, and general operation of the school, and passed out the school's catalog and brochure which details its course offerings and degrees.

The school is expensive and geared to a certain type of Moroccan -- not your average one. But I think that's okay and with some modifications, it could make an excellent training institute for the country's future leaders.

Surprisingly, the medium of instruction is English and I learned from an anonymous source that religion is tolerated, but not encouraged. In fact, one can actually be penalized for openly practicing Islam. That is disappointing to me as a Muslim and a westerner. It is unfortunate that much of the Muslim world equates traditional Islamic practices with intellectual backwardness. A lingering inferiority mentality resulting from colonialism and a lack of correct Islamic education, I think, are the two main factors in this almost indiscriminate negating of one's heritage.

The West has many good things to offer, and the East would be wise to accept them, but in that process of cultural transfusion, they need to remember that they have a great tradition of culture and learning to "bring to the table, too." And that in striving to improve their education, they must not in the process become what Dr. Carter G. Woodson termed "miseducated." I wonder if they have that African American book in their library?

DAY 21: TUESDAY, JULY 14 – KHENIFRA, MARRAKECH

DINKER PATEL

The Atlas and the Cascades

Morocco has some of the most unique physiographic features and spectacular sights. With an area of 446,550 square kilometers, Morocco is about the size of California. Its current population is about 30 million. Situated at the Northwest corner of Africa and bound by the Atlantic and Mediterranean oceans and within close proximity of Europe, Morocco is an ideal destination for travel.

This summer, I was privileged to be part of a diverse group of distinguished American scholars to embark on an educational mission to undertake a field trip to the Kingdom of Morocco. We were assisted in our educational endeavor by a group of Moroccan experts under a program organized by the Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange located in Rabat.

Morocco has four distinct geographic regions. The Rif massif, the Atlas mountains, the coastal plains and the lowlands. Each of these regions features important characteristics. The Rif massif is located in the north, parallel to the Mediterranean coast. Generally, the Rif mountains are under 2,000 meters. This region gets the most rain giving rise to pines, oaks, and scrub vegetation.

The Atlas mountains extend across Morocco in a southwest to northeast direction from the Atlantic to the Rif. The high Atlas range is 700 kilometers long and 100 wide at the center. There are nearly fifty peaks which rise over 3,500 meters. Jebel Toubkal reaching a height of 4,160 meters, is the highest peak in North Africa. To the north is the Middle Atlas range with some of the most beautiful cedar forests. The gently undulating uplands contain numerous lakes. The Sirwa, an extinct volcano, is located at the intersection of the High Atlas and the Anti-Atlas. The region has unique dykes and black lava flows.

The coastal plain region extends along Morocco's Western seaboard. Most Moroccans live in this region. A string of villages and cities line the coast. The fourth region is comprised of lowlands. It is located south of the Atlas range. It merges with the Sahara along the southeastern borders of the country.

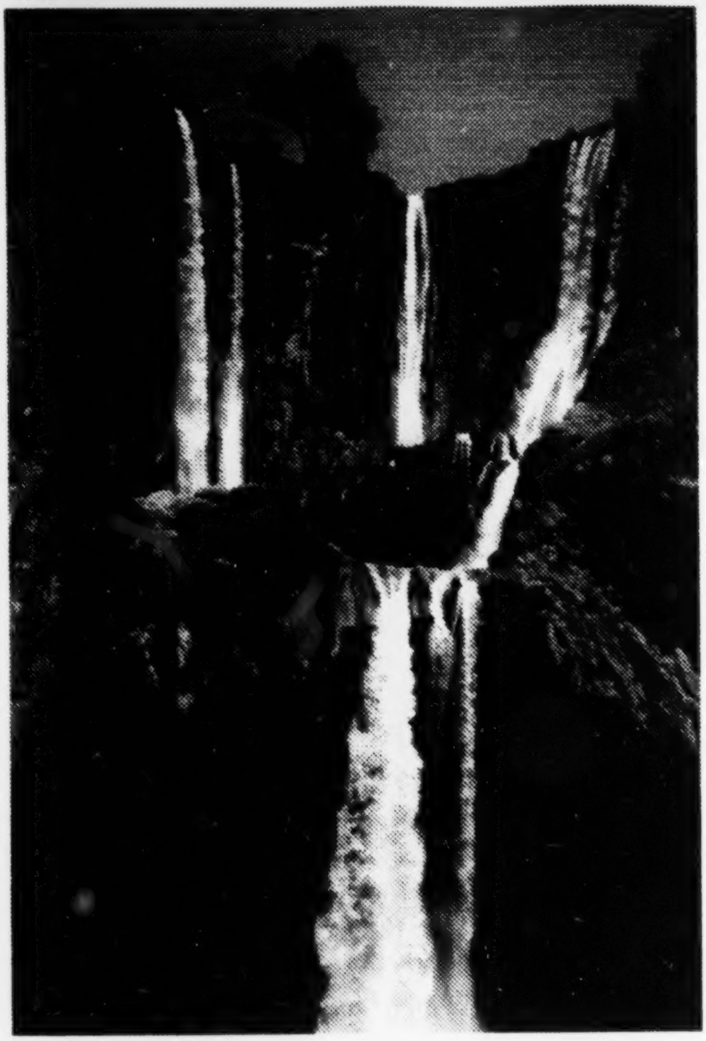
The snow and rain in the high Atlas mountains gives rise to many rivers. Two of the major rivers are the Moulouya, which flows into the Mediterranean Sea, and the Sebore, which winds its way to the Atlantic. Much of the country's agriculture is between the mountains interior and the Atlantic coastal lowlands, into which flow the Oum er Rbia and Tensift rivers. The coastal north and west have mild winters and pleasant summers, while interior cities experience more extreme temperatures in both seasons. Mountain winters are colder and wetter but summers are cool and nice.

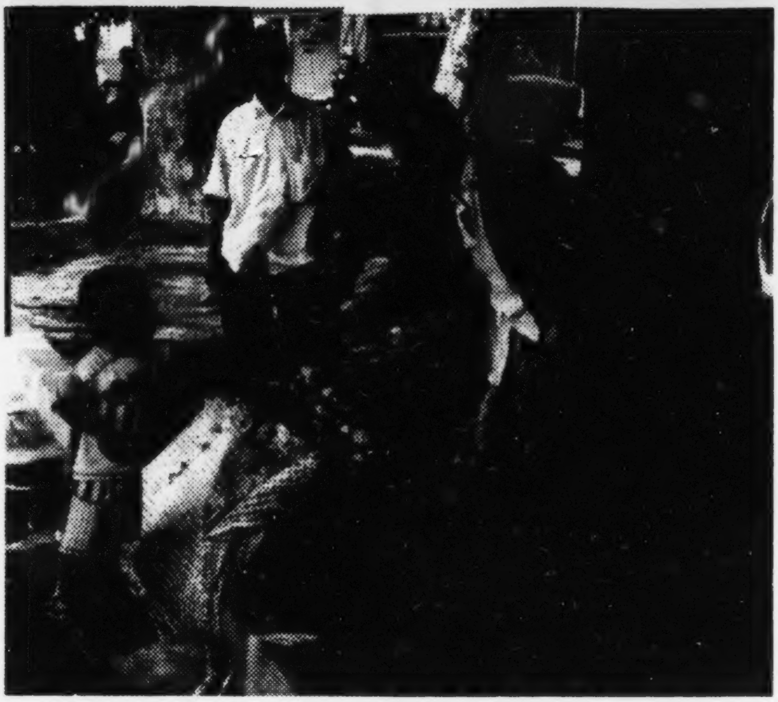
Situated in the Middle Atlas region, about 150 kilometers northwest of Marrakesh we witnessed the splendor of Cascades d'Ouzoud. Next to the parking lot of the Ouzoud is a small hotel-café called Dar Essalam. This is an open courtyard with an ornate tree, off of which there are large dormitory type rooms. Along the hotel is a campsite shaded by fruit trees. A path from the campsite leads one to the Oued Ouzoud. The water collects in several pools where there were several swimmers. One can see a variety of vegetation, olive and temerix and majestic mountain peaks. An opening in the rocky cliffs also reveals a fortress built by the Portuguese in the Middle Ages.

From the top, one can see the waters of the river thundering down past a rich mixture of vegetation, oleanders, and protruding rock formations to a depth of 110 meters into a pool below. The cool waters form a spray which in the sunlight forms shifting rainbows. As I wandered off the path along the top of the falls to get a panoramic view, my colleagues beaconed me to not get too close to the edge. Yes, we had been together long enough that everyone looked after each other – Great companions!

From the campsite a series of paths wind down to the valley below. Several cafes, tent sites and souvenir stalls flank the terraces. I accompanied Nabil and Faris – our adventurous young guides who wanted to go down to the base of the falls. I volunteered to go along. When we were at the bottom, the roar of the falls transformed into music. Multiple falls converged at two successive levels and collected in a lake. (Please see photo of the cascades.) The great basin forms a fabulous natural pool for swimming. Nabil and Faris braved the strong currents of the stream and swam across to the opposite side of the river, climbed up the steep cliffside until they reached a cave like opening. From there, they jumped into the pool below.

We were told that a short hike beyond the lower pool there are semi-underground passages which lead to a small settlement called the Mexican village. We were tempted but decided not to explore. As we climbed back to the top, a welcome committee was awaiting our return. We had stayed too long. Makayn Mushkil! (No Problem.) We the adventurous trio were rewarded with tall glasses of freshly squeezed orange juice (Morocco has the best) by the travel group anxiously awaiting our safe return.





DAY 22: WEDNESDAY, JULY 15 -- MARRAKECH

BETTY LAU

Munching Through Morocco 2, or *Ruminations on Touring the Marrakesh Medina with Abdurrahmane Mike Fitzgerald and Wherein Dinker, Jerry K and I Later Explore the Souq on Our Own and I Observe Dinker Reduce the Budget Deficit While Jerry Tries to Bargain and Dinker Saves the Deal So We All Get T-shirts*

Abdurrahmane Mike Fitzgerald led us on a tour of the main historic structures of Marrakesh. We started at the Menara Gardens, an olive grove beside a large rectangular pool with a pavilion at one end. We then walked by the remains of a former mosque and Almohad minaret, the twins of which are in Rabat and Seville. We had visited the one in Rabat, and I looked forward to seeing the third in Seville on the Spain part of my journey. While at the minaret, a couple of red costumed water sellers came by and posed for paid photos. I think they must make more money from selling their images than water, although I did observe one actually selling water in the medina. A young mother, totally veiled and with a baby, tried to sell us some bangles. We wouldn't buy any, and she ended up presenting a bangle to Ajile and me. Ajile struck up a conversation with her, but when I asked to take a photo, she wanted a lot of dirhams, so we declined, but gave her some dirhams "for the baby."

We continued on to the Saadian Tombs, which were dense with carved stucco and calligraphic inscriptions. The earliest Alaouites (current dynasty) are buried here, but now there's no more space, and they are buried elsewhere. The band of Qu'ranic writings is about God's mercy – like a plea to Allah to "excuse us for what we did." Apparently they did a lot that needed excusing, such as burying their dead in a mosque. We also visited a former reception hall, the Hall of Ambassadors and the dungeons below, where up to 3,000 European prisoners were kept. The dungeon was dark and dank. Natural light was available through ceiling openings.

We then returned to the hotel and Ajile, Lurana, Fatima and I had lunch with Abdurrahmane Mike. Ajile asked how he had converted. He related that he and his best friend, Ken Honerkamp, were traveling in Pakistan in 1970. He had been a "conflicted" young man who entered Islam as a result of observing the Muslims in Pakistan and how they treated each other and cared for the poorest among them. He met an old, crippled teacher of Qu'ranic studies on a bus who told him that only in Islam would he find complete happiness. He decided not to convert until he'd discussed it with Ken. While on his way to rejoin Ken, a landslide blocked the road and he had to make a decision on his own. He "entered Islam." When he finally got back to Ken, he discovered that Ken had also entered Islam. Mike returned to the States, married Camilla, moved to Morocco, raised a family and has been here for 25 years with no regrets. One of his daughters attends college in the U.S. and is doing well on her Moroccan education.

Marrakesh is one of the designated ovens of Morocco. At 115 degrees, I believe it. We piled back onto the bus for a tour of the medina and a visit to Jemma al F'na, a huge square just outside the medina. It's supposed to be a den of prostitution, pickpockets and thieves. We had beverages on a roof top café and watched the square come to life: food vendors, acrobats, and snake charmers slowly took over the entire area. We plunged into it with gusto, ever careful to watch our backs, belongings, and pockets. After a short, uneventful observational tour, Jerry, Dinker and I returned to the souq.

Dinker has almost eliminated the Moroccan budget deficit by his purchases, this time consisting of hats, hammered Berber and Tuareg metal plates, a hide hand drum and T-shirts. It was mesmerizing watching Dinker negotiate and close each deal. We settled in beside him to scrutinize his brass plate bargaining techniques, but he asked us to move away, afraid that we would ruin everything by an injudicious remark. After the bargain was sealed, the manager asked if we could tell the difference between a Berber and a Tuareg. He pointed out that I had Berber features, like him: broad face, high cheek bones, and the same kind of nose.

Moving on, we found a T-shirt shop. We looked them over and selected two. Jerry opened with a comment about the street price. The shopkeeper countered with 2 for 180, then 2 for 160, and finally, 2 for 100. Jerry wouldn't settle, insisting it was cheaper elsewhere. I could see the T-shirts were of better quality than those on the street and really wanted to buy at that price, but couldn't intervene in this test of wills. The shopkeeper ordered Jerry to leave.

Dinker threw in a distraction: "Do you have another color?"

Reminded of a possible sale, the shopkeeper quickly rummaged through his stock, "Black? Gray? How about these?"

Methodically examining each shirt, Dinker finally added one to our two, patted the stack, and smilingly inquired, "How much?"

The shopkeeper announced, "3 for 150."

"I'll pay," interjected Jerry.

We repaid Jerry outside and hailed a taxi to the Dragon d'Or for dinner. The driver wanted 15 dh, but Jerry offered 10. The driver slammed the door and sped away. Dinker pointed out the difference was $ .50. In the end, we had to pay 20 dh.

The Dragon d'Or looked impressive from the outside, with the characters Luck, Fortune and Prosperity in the windows. Oddly, they weren't facing the street, but faced inward toward the dining area. Inside, another large character, the stylized form of double happiness, was mounted upside down. Weird. Were the owners really Chinese? The owner was the French-speaking chef who told me his mother had fled to Morocco during the Vietnam War, married, and opened a Chinese restaurant. Although the décor was elegant, the food was expensive and mediocre, with small portions. We had beef kabobs with shrimp chips, a dish of shrimp, bamboo and fungi called "cloud ears," and stir fried chicken with vegetables over hard, crunchy pre-fab noodles. (Pre-fab noodles are a sure sign of poor cuisine.) We were charged for tea and rice as well. Total: 300d including tip.

Comment: Tiny portions for Seattle prices.

Another Chinese restaurant was nearby, but I was afraid to suggest trying it.

DAY 23: THURSDAY, JULY 16 -- MARRAKECH (OURIKA)

AARON BRAUN

After a restless night's sleep, probably due to last night's encounter with a towel-wielding lunatic beggar who seemed even more threatening than his Fessi 'spitter' brother of a couple of weeks ago [I actually extracted my silly Swiss army knife, extending its woeful blade and praying he did not have a blade inside his towel!], I find myself helping the waiters open up the Hotel dining room for a quick continental breakfast. Within minutes a German couple enter and, over OJ and coffee, I contemplate alternative scenarios to this boss/secretary/mistress probability, envisioning *Boys in Brazil* possibilities to amuse myself at this ungodly hour.

At 9 AM, Fulbright time, we leave for Ourika. Fatima had spoken of long arduous treks along the countryside amidst heavily wooded areas and the need for thorn-resistant long pants. This ominous advice, along with word that the day would be a scorcher, has Ann Fey opting to take the day off and relax her weary body, an option that had probably flitted in each participant's mind, certainly mine. [The following journal entry by Alba is a letter to the missing Ann with a drawing of a local home we visited.]

On reaching the outskirts of Ourika's Berber community, we disembark our trusty, stifling bus and climb onto three separate vehicles, a sedan and two open-backed mini-trucks with seats having been set up for our learned backsides. The bumpy dirt road quickly has the more sensitively-reared amongst us rising and standing for the rest of this ten-minute blast along corn fields, sunflowers, various livestock and so many smiling, waving faces as to override any considerations of hot treks through thorny wilderness... Fatima seems to have overestimated the terrain or underestimated our ability to enjoy this outing... I personally am struck dumb by the vision that so resembles my hometown in Israel in the mid to late fifties. The sights, smells and textures are near orgasmic!

We arrive at Abdurrahmane Fitzgerald's gloriously expansive villa, a two-story structure with an apple orchard in front, a large and simply constructed swimming pool in back, and superb vistas available on the second floor of threshers and farmers in the distance.

While some rest, Fatima leads a large group of us along the aqueducts of the community towards the Ourika schoolhouse and mill. Each of us carries at least one bottle of Sidi Ali mineral water, and all but Jacoob Effendi, the intrepid Jerusalemite, are properly hatted, myself with a recently purchased Marrakech tourist number. The midday heat is overwhelming, and pretty soon the otherwise hirsute Jacoob [werewolf-like in all ways but one], realizes the folly of his ways, taking shelter wherever possible, his dome acquiring a steadily more scarlet hue.

The cactus bushes I had been infatuated with during many a bus ride through the Moroccan countryside finally becomes available for a photo op. Alas, there are no birds perched on these particular specimens, but at least I can line up a couple of shots without the threat of window glare. [In a few days, Volubilis would provide even more of these statuesque growths.]

We encounter a group of kids near the mill, frolicking in the aqueduct waters, entertaining us with their karate stances and trying to imitate my hand motions and sounds of wind-passing... The mill and schoolhouse are both deserted, but further down the road we enter a smaller mill/residence where we are welcomed and enamored by our host as he mills his flour.

Enroute back to the Fitzgerald villa, we are welcomed into the home of his caretaker, where, after a tour of the grounds, we drop onto the living area's carpeted floor exhausted. I can't recall how many we are, but that deliciously cool space now has bodies strewn about as if it were a battlefield.

Fatima leads the stalwart group to an area where the locals are threshing. Peter and I opt out, choosing to return to the villa and its shade. Conversation is minimal, each of us merely inquiring as to the other's health and consciousness -- exhausted, dehydrated, spent -- a couple of El Awrences crossing the Sinai in David Lean's epic...

The first floor of the villa is crowded with resting Fulbrighters and I find a comfortable wicker chair on the second floor. Faris, Nabil and Jerry K are partaking of the pool, soon to be evicted by the women in a strange Islamic segregation ritual that thankfully did not occur at the Chefchaouen hotel pool, where it was lovely to share the pool with the entire Casewit clan. Alas, when in Rome...

Whilst the women bathe, Faris and Nabil pull out their Frisbee and I join them for a bit. Occasionally retrieving the Frisbee in the apple orchard, I wonder if it would be OK to pick some. Lunch is yet to be served, and the women of the villa are still preparing the cous cous off to the side. Informed that I may pick some apples, I go about it with a passion. They are crisp and tart – manna from the gods.

Lunch is served and is followed by a comfortable Q&A session with Fatima and Faris serving as co-translators. All the while, I am transfixed by our host's preparation of the mint tea. Using two pots and great blocks of sugar and mint branches, he responds to questions while pouring from one pot to the other until the texture is just right before he begins to pour. Moroccan mint tea has been a beloved staple throughout this trip, but on this particular day in Ourika, the tea is exquisite!

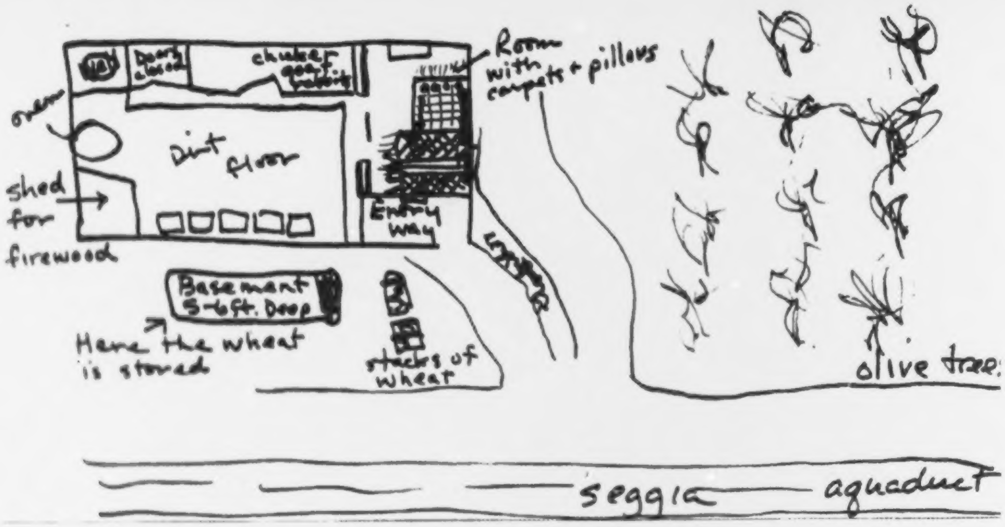
Just as we prepare to take leave of this splendid oasis, Fatima takes a group of those who hadn't been on the earlier walk on a short jaunt to the threshers, much to the chagrin of some who were all set to go. They return soon thereafter and the caravan of three vehicles wends its wondrous way through the dirt road and fields back to the bus.

At the side of the bus, some local merchants have set up their wares. There is a shopping frenzy wherein I purchase yet another hamza knife (the third) for my son and four onyx figures -- two camels and two swans. [Damn! John Cabe has his sights on my camels!] The Dink actually purchases a wood and brass pistol while Alba picks up a bauble or two and Jacoob haggles for some more jewelry for his daughters. There is a certain tension during this spree, as many on the hot bus are anxious to get back... Could it be that we are shopped out? Well, perhaps momentarily... Who cares? It's been a glorious day!

DAY 23: THURSDAY, JULY 16 -- MARRAKECH (OURIKA)
ALBA DE LEON

Dear Ann,
We miss you on our trip to Ourika. Hope you are feeling better.

We are lunching at Abdurrahmane Fitzgerald's house eating cous cous with chicken and vegetables and have taken a walk to a mill in Ourika. Si Mohamed, Fitzgerald's caretaker, invited us to visit his home down the road.



DAY 23: THURSDAY, JULY 16 -- MARRAKECH (CHEZ ALI)

JANE FATIMA CASEWIT

As many participants had told me they were hoping to see a "Fantasia" exhibition during the seminar, I was determined to try to find one, although I knew that mid-summer is certainly off-season for most riders. The Spanish word "fantasia" is actually used by foreigners and tourists to describe this breath-taking display of horsemanship. Moroccans use one of the many Arabic words for horse and say "kholouwa" or "equestrian skills". The word implies skill on the part of the horse as well as the rider. In this stunning display of horsemanship both man and horse show off their abilities by taking off as fast as possible in a top speed gallop in a row of about a dozen riders. They gallop approximately the length of a football field and, just before reaching the end, they raise their rifles into the air and fire several loud shots whilst stopping their horses short at the same time. The crowds of spectators are completely engaged in the excitement of thundering horses' hooves, dust flying in their wake, and the final deafening boom of the rifles. Many people sit right at the far end of the riding space and therefore experience the riders galloping straight at them and usually stopping just in time. The glamour of the display is all the more exotic because the riders are wearing their traditional clothes including turban and *baboosh* (*balghah*) and are riding in hand-sewn saddles enlaced with bright red and gold embroidery and tassles. The sport has its origins in Berber battle tactics, but today performances are held on the occasion of special holidays such as the Feast of the Throne or "mawlids" of important saints.

Viewing these equestrian shows is always a highlight of any visit to Morocco. But how could I find a Fantasia in mid-July in Marrakech? Then I remembered that my son had gone on a school visit to Marrakech and went to a Moroccan cultural Disneyland which had opened a few years ago just outside of Marrakech. Housed in a fake kasbah, "Chez Ali" provides a complete Moroccan cultural experience all under one roof and in an evening. Tourists can enjoy Moroccan cuisine and tea under orange trees or in Berber marquees and watch Berber dancing and oriental ("belly") dancing as well as the Fantasia. Between sumptuous courses, camel rides around the Fantasia field are available. Walls of a fake kasbah rise all around and the clear star-lit Marrakech sky gazes down upon the whole unique experience.

All these thoughts were developing in my mind as a distinct possibility for our group. On the one hand, I was anxious to show the group a Fantasia show, but I was hesitant to take them to such a touristy "kitsch" place. Finally I consulted a couple of participants, who were enthusiastic about the idea, and an encounter in the hotel lobby with a jokester who claimed to be Ali himself led me to believe that an evening at Chez Ali might well be worth including in the seminar program.

The man in the lobby who said he was Ali guaranteed me hard-to-get tickets for our group plus transport and a spectacular Fantasia. All he needed was a down payment to ensure that the rare tickets could be obtained. He was even saving me the twenty minute trip out to Chez Ali to purchase the tickets. So I gullibly handed over the money to him and received a hastily scratched receipt in return and a promise that a car would come to the hotel that evening to lead us to the great Chez Ali.

I knew that something was amiss when our bus driver's temper flared upon realizing that a car was going to lead him to chez Ali. He knew perfectly well where the site was and warned me that we might have paid too much for the tickets. On arrival at the door, sure enough, abundant tickets were selling for 100 Dh including entrance, show and a drink. I had paid 180 Dh a ticket! Our driver now flew into another rage when he learnt that I had been cheated and he demanded reimbursement. The Chez Ali employees apologized, but said they couldn't control people who bought masses of tickets and then re-sold them at a profit for themselves. The ticket seller who had claimed to be Ali fled in his car with his companion.

Oh well, I thought, 10 years in Morocco and I am still had now and then. Marrakech is particularly notorious for tricksters. I remember once when we lived in Marrakech a man came to find me at the American Language Center and insisted that my husband had ordered several liters of clorax cleaning liquid and that he (this merchant) was delivering it and wanted to be paid. I paid him and took the jerrycans home, only to find to my dismay that they were filled with blue-colored water!

The evening at Chez Ali was not unpleasant, if very noisy. We were served tea and Moroccan pastries in a Berber tent and were entertained by various groups of dancers, musicians and belly-dancers. Finally we took our places in the stand for the Fantasia, but before it started we had the pleasure of watching several of our participants straddle themselves onto camels and pitch to and fro in front of everyone across the Fantasia arena. We all enjoyed good laughs and picture-taking. The horsemanship was not disappointing: the riders were gallant, their horses stunning, the noise of the galloping and shots earth-shaking.

We were all in good spirits as we loaded onto the Fulbright jalopy and headed back for Marrakesh. Suddenly we heard a panicky groan from the back of the bus when Jerry K. discovered that he did not have the case to his famous camcorder. We stopped the bus, causing a traffic jam behind us and I jumped off and tried to enter the cardboard kasbah from a kitchen door. It was locked so I took advantage of the situation to get some much needed cardio-vascular stimulation and started jogging to the main entrance. Then I heard rapid thuds behind me and realised that Jerry K. was not only catching up with me but rapidly overtaking me at an Olympian pace. We finally both arrived at the main entrance and back to the pastry and tea tent and the case was found under the table. We jogged back to the bus and were greeted by cheers from our fellow Fulbrighters. Sadly, the evening turned out to be a very sorrowful one because when we arrived back at the hotel, Ajile received a message that her brother-in-law had been killed in a car accident, obliging her to cut short her stay in Morocco. We were all very sorry and admired her strength in a time of crisis. Her calm presence was missed by everyone after her return to the U.S.

DAY 24: FRIDAY, JULY 17 -- MARRAKECH, RABAT

ANN FEY

We take leave of the comfortable Hotel de la Menara and of Marrakech and board the bus (now called "that bus"), clutching bottles of Sidi Ali for the return to Rabat. A scheduled presentation by USAID requires that we return to the Commission by three o'clock. Once again, we register at the Annakhil Hotel.

The presentation by the representatives of the USAID is a packaged overview, illustrated with charts and graphs, of the activities, achievements and objectives of the agency in Morocco. The material is packaged in a computer program, and projected on-screen. We each receive a xerox of the report. A fair amount of general information is provided. Discussion is limited by referring questions to the report's level and nature of information. The report's purpose, as explained, seems to be to indicate to those who influence the funding of the agency that although a great deal has been accomplished, there are still great needs. Unfortunately, the selected title for the report is *Morocco: Less Than Meets the Eye*. Supper is on your own, and several of us can be found in the default mode, in the hotel's tiny second floor dining room.

DAY 25: SATURDAY, JULY 18 -- MEKNES, MOULAY, IDRISS AND VOLUBILIS

BY DINKER I. PATEL

Meknes

Meknes is said to have originated in the 10th century when the Meknassa people settled on the banks of Oued (River) Boufekrane. The village settlements, Meknassa Zeitouna and Meknassa Taza were fortified by the Almoravids in 1066. The Almohads occupied Meknassa in 1145. With the arrival of the Merenids in the next century, a new Kasbah, a great mosque, a Zaouia (brotherhood) and a medrassa (college) were built.

Moulay Ismail, one of the first monarchs of the Alaouite dynasty, who rose to power in 1672, began to transform Meknassa/Meknes by transferring the capital this location. Meknes was strategically located at the crossroads of east-west north-south transportation routes, within the hinterland of a productive region with access to the Zerhoun springs.

During his rule of 55 years, Moulay Ismail enlisted artisans, laborers, slaves, prisoners, and other inhabitants of his growing empire to clear land and build ramparts, and walls with majestic gates, palaces and gardens; kasbahs and mosques; granaries and stables.

Moulay Ismail sought the hand of French Princess Conti - daughter of King Louis XIV of France. Disappointed at being refused, he set out to build a palace to rival Versailles. He started many grandiose building schemes. His son Moulay Abdallah and grandson Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdallah continued the building projects throughout Morocco well toward the end of the 18th century.

Meknes was neglected during the 19th century since it was no longer the permanent residence of the reigning monarchs. Only since the reign of Moulay Hassan has restoration work enabled Meknes to retain some of its original character. Today Meknes serves as a regional nucleus for agri-business. Cereals, citrus fruits, wines, olives, and agricultural machinery are important. Arts and crafts, pottery, painting on wood, embroidery and carpet weaving flourish. The old city (Medina), the Mellah and the Royal Golf Gardens lie to the west of Oued Boufekrane while the Ville Nouvelle extends to the east of the river.

Among the interesting places to visit are: Bab el Mansour, The Museum of Moroccan Art, the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail, Bou Inania Medrassa, Koubba and the Prison of Christian Slaves. Bab el Mansour is a majestic city gate with marble columns. The arch is covered with ceramics and green mosaic and dominated by arabesque tracery.

The Museum of Moroccan Art, formerly Vizier Tamai's palace, is an example of 19th century architecture with Andalusian garden. The museum displays pottery, clothing, tools, carpets, and other works of art. The Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail is an active Moroccan shrine that non-Muslims can visit. The sanctuary in which the sultan is buried is decorated with Zellij tiles and spiraling stucco work. A series of courts and chambers surround the tomb. The courtyard has fountains engraved with marble, while some walls have unique mosaics. The cedar ceiling has intricate carving, while in some chambers the ground is covered with colorful Meknes carpets. Upon leaving the shrine one is likely to encounter someone seeking baraka (charismatic blessings).

Bou Inania Medrassa. Similar to Medrassas in other cities, the Bou Inania includes a central courtyard with tiled floor and a shell shaped basin. The prayer hall has inscriptions from the Koran etched on the marble arches. Rooms for students are situated above the gallery. Across the Inania Medrassa is the Great Mosque of Meknes.

Koubba - This is a domed building, which served as the reception hall for ambassadors and guests to the imperial court. Prison of Christian Slaves: a series of subterranean vaults used for captive slaves and as storehouses or granary. Slaves captured by the Sallee Rovers were brought here to work on the continuous construction projects.

Moulay Idriss

Moulay Idriss located about 18 miles north of Meknes dates back to Morocco's first dynasty. Moulay Idriss was a great grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. As such Idriss was welcomed as Imam - a spiritual and political leader. Moroccan people adopted the Sunni or Malekite system of Islam, in concert with the Andalusian Caliphate of Cordoba.

Moulay Idriss' tomb and Zaouia, with green-tiled roof, lies at the center of the town. A cylindrical minaret decorated with green tiles which reproduce calligraphed verses from the Koran indicate the feeling of devotion that exists. Beyond the mausoleum lies the open square of the Souk. A series of stepped-up alleys give rise to the two hilly districts: Tesga and Khiber. The taller hill-Khabir, with its winding streets has Souks where one can purchase religious articles and regional crafts. The town is known for excellent local nougat and arbutus berries. Below the houses that cling to the hillside one can see the meandering silver ribbon of Oued (river) Khouman and the imposing skyline of Jebel Zerhoun in the background. Due to the sacred status of Moulay Idriss El Akhbar (the Elder), the city bearing his name is an important site of pilgrimage and an August moussem.

Volubilis

Volubilis is located within two miles of Moulay Idriss and twenty miles from Meknes. Occupying a high plateau, Volubilis is traversed by Oued Fertassa and Oued Khouman. The name Volubilis comes from the Berber name for Oleander, Walili. The region is surrounded by the ridges of the Zerhoun mountains. The site was depicted in Martin Scorsese's film "The Last Temptation of Christ." Volubilis was a thriving center of Roman Africa in the first century. The surrounding area

produced grains, corn, olives, and supported domestic animals. Indeed this was an important trading area for Europe. Barbary bears, deer, lions, elephants, and other wildlife was used in Roman games and slaughtered to extinction.

The city of Volubilis continued as a thriving center long after the third century when the Romans lost their foothold. It was inhabited well into the 18th century when it was abandoned in favor of Moulay Idriss. What remained was demolished by the earthquake of 1755.

Excavation by the French archaeologist Tissol in 1915 revealed that the site was occupied since Neolithic times, in the Iron age and the Carthaginian period. During the last 50 years there has been renewed effort at restoring some of the areas of this slumbering Moroccan settlement. It includes a reconstruction of an olive press, which was financed by the students of the French Lycee in Meknes. Oil production, grist mills, tool making, and other industrial activities flourished.

The dominant structure of Volubilis is the Triumphal Arch, built in honor of the African Emperor Caracula. The Emperor was instrumental in obtaining citizenship for the provincials. Modern archaeologists have restored the bronze horse and chariot which sits atop the arch.

One is awed by the grand scale of the town, the width of the Decumanus Maximus - the main street - the size of luxurious mansions, the Capitol, Basilica, markets, temples, aqueducts, fountains, and public baths.

Volubilis contains many of the original altars, sculptures, mosaics, and artifacts excavated at the site. Some items, however, are displayed in other museums in the Morocco. Following are some of the mosaics found at Volubilis.

Mosaic of the Athlete, depicting a chariot jumper receiving the winners cup for a desultor race.
A mosaic depicting Labors of Hercules.
Nymphus bathing.
Geometrical design with medallions of Bacchus surrounded by the Four Seasons.
Mosaics depicting dolphins and other animals in the House of Orpheus.

We spent two nights at the luxurious Hotel Volubilis which sits atop the ridge of the Zerhoun - providing us with a panoramic view of an unforgettable city in a country which has provided many enriching experiences.

DAY 25: SATURDAY, JULY 18 -- RABAT, MEKNES

AARON BRAUN

Last night's poor Lebanese cuisine at a Avenue Mohammed V eatery hasn't quite left me this morning, nor have the memories of yesterday's 4 hour bus jaunt, speedy lunch at the Annakhil and rush to the USAID power-point presentation. Suffering from near-exhaustion and fearing my yawns would awaken other participants, I had to step out of the Commission and hang out for a bit with my favorite Moroccan turtle. This turtle and I had bonded over the weeks, and I think he knew when I was out for my cigarette breaks, for he lingered by the Commission steps awaiting yet another feeding of lilac bush. Yesterday I may have overfed him, as I too lingered perhaps a tad longer, intent on missing as much as possible of the redundancies and passing of the buck so prevalent within. Alas, Monique Bidaoui's most attractive gams were no match for Abderrahim Bouazza's unattractive oratory style, wherein every fourth or fifth question was met with a declaration of ignorance and suggestion that the answer be pursued elsewhere. [Once in a while, a student will ask me a question regarding a film's production, awards or the like, and I ask for a week's reprieve to research the answer, but, Allah be praised, this is a rare occurrence... I would be embarrassed out of the classroom were I to be so stumped so often!]...And so, the turtle and I became intimate buddies... no language barrier here.

After yet another breakfast spent ogling my beloved waitress, I pack a short-excursion bag as we head to Meknes and Volubilis.

Then follows what can only be termed a tension-filled bus ride into the city of Meknes, wherein Fatima and the driver seem immersed in an age-old gender dilemma -- the driver refuses Fatima's suggestions as to how to enter the town and reach the University we are to visit. Rejecting this female's advice, the driver circles the city interminably before Fatima's navigational skills are proven sound. [Hell, Lady Fatima -- I would have followed your instructions with nary a hesitation, as would any of the men in our group, through hell and high water!]

We arrive at the University grounds, where a cigarette break causes me to lose the group. I walk about the grounds collecting various acorn specimens and foliage and hang with the driver and his assistant before finally locating the group just in time to have a mint tea and visit a convenient modern facility.

Lunch at a local Meknes eatery, where, lo-and-behold, there is that rarest of commodities, an air-conditioning system. Alas, it is not very effective, and Jerry S, Faris and Nabil join me intermittently as I literally stand 'neath the AC system by the door in between bites of a delicious lamb tagine. Others have the decency to stay at the table throughout the meal, some with disastrous consequences.

As we begin to board the bus for our historical tour of Meknes, it becomes obvious that one of our most intrepid travelers, Fair Lady Elizabeth, hath succumbed. With laudable concern and compassion, Lurana offers her some medication, stirred generously into a bottle of Sidi Ali, a concoction that contorts Elizabeth's lovely visage as she downs this potion.

Fast on my city-bred feet, I hurriedly extract Elizabeth's overnight bag from the bus's luggage compartment and approach Mother Fatima with the suggestion that Elizabeth is in absolutely no shape to partake of this eagerly awaited historical tour of Meknes... "She ought to be speedily chaperoned to the Volubilis Inn without hesitation," say I, caring, loving, concerned humanitarian that I am...AHEM...and volunteer my services in that capacity. Somehow, inexplicably, Fatima's eyes register suspicion. [Could it be that my recent return to the Grand Hotel after only a single night at my homestay has branded me a laggard in my associates' eyes?] Fatima's suggestion that Faris accompany Elizabeth in a cab is argued vociferously...after all, he is but a 15 year old, and Elizabeth needs a mature, able bodied adult [ahem] to escort her! Unconvinced of my honorable intent, Fatima relents, "All right, but YOU, Aaron, pay for the cab ride." A small price to pay, I think, as I hurl myself out of the bus and gather Faris and Elizabeth away before an alternative plan of action is concocted...

Faris negotiates with a cabbie for a bit, and an excruciatingly long time is spent deciding which taxi will be employed to ferry us. [I'm still not certain as to the reasons for this game of musical taxies, but Maroc has been full of quaint little mysteries...what's another?]

It is a 20-minute cab ride through some lovely countryside, with a brief stop in which the driver chats with a comrade he pulls over. The cactus bushes that provide nesting havens for local birds are most prevalent along these roads and even poor, ailing Elizabeth finds the strength to comment on the lovely vistas.

We arrive at the Volubilis Inn, check in and get to our rooms. After Elizabeth is attended to, I change and hit the pool, where Faris cannot join me for lack of swimming trunks. Perhaps my associates' evil eyes are not indeed responsible, but, after placing my glasses poolside and diving into the pool, I climb out to discover that one of the Moroccan bathers has trampled on them, and I spend a few labored minutes readjusting them.

Having earlier spied some choice cactus pear bushes at the Inn's entrance, I climb the unending steps up with a towel and my Swiss army knife, intent on harvesting a few for the Dink and whoever else may wish to imbibe. As I am contemplating how to circumvent the dangerous thorns, the Fulbright chariot arrives, and out pour some of the most pathetic, woebegone souls -- seems the historical tour was historically steaming, more so than usual, and my poor associates file out with "beaded bubbles" of perspiration, some glaring at me as I look to gather up my luggage and Elizabeth's remaining piece.

Si Mick -- a former roommate and cherished friend, offers the "unkindest cut of all," as he blurts "YOU WUSS!!" at me, with only a slight trace of a smile.

Dinner that evening is a glorious repast atop the dining patio level of the Inn overlooking the grandeur that is the Volubilis ruins. Elizabeth gathers the strength to join us briefly for some nourishment before beating a hasty retreat to her sick bed. Sarah Casewit is at her precocious best and her mother's concern subsides enough to get comfortable at the table and engage in easygoing conversation with Yakub Effendi. Si Mick orders a bottle of red wine and it is passed from table to table... The camaraderie is absolutely exquisite, and even the poor waitering and poorer accounting at dinner's end cannot negate the grand time had by all save poor, poor Elizabeth.

We had nearly all succumbed during the five week seminar, some more so than others, but it had been most disquieting to witness brave Elizabeth's swooning countenance outside the Meknes restaurant. Somehow, I had believed her to be invulnerable, an intrepid traveler who has repeatedly sailed the Greek isles, an Olympian goddess impervious to mortal maladies... Seeing her pale and swooning has punctuated this seminar's medical woes, soon to reach plague proportions in our final week in Rabat.

DAY 26: SUNDAY, JULY 19 -- VOLUBILIS

LURANA AMIS

Alone last night in a single – I didn't know how much I needed time alone nor how much I missed Ajile and how present she seems. "My" room – down what proved lots of flights – looked out via a picture window and tiny terrace over a garden to distant ruins of Volubilis. Air conditioning completed my contentment despite a company of small hopping bugs I waged war on with a slipper.

[Editorial note: Inasmuch as the flights of steps are twice mentioned here, it seems an apt moment to intrude with the observation that Si Mick Lewis actually COUNTED the number of steps at the Volubilis Inn and shared this information, remembering it as either 137 or 139 – I believe it was the former... An odd character trait, Mick, this obsessive counting, but certainly one of your many, many charms.]

Up, up stairs to a terrace for breakfast and there – oh happy surprise – Fatima and Abdelkarim Rabai (my homestay dear people). I was so glad to see them I cried...but recovered enough to stow away much OJ, many malawi!

Our speaker (Mohamed Makdoun, Faculté des Lettres, Meknès University, a really impressive specialist on Volubilis) spoke a bit about the extent of the ruins, the role of the city and the rather mysterious and sudden abandonment of same. Then bus to entrance. It was soon clear that we'd not started early enough. Most of us sheltered in even the tiniest bits of shade and I blessed my lovely, ever-wet towel. (Fatima Rabai soon spotted its virtues – I'll leave it for her at departure – of which I already regret the too too swift approach.)

Volubilis is amazing. It goes on and on in different stages of development and it is all just open... there is simply no money to cover things. Even the many mosaics are merely protected by a low chain. Mosaics? Oh yes. Hercules, Zodiac, Sea Critturs, etc. The whole site has just been declared part of the "Patrimoine Universel." That may provide some much-needed protection; funds will protect and expand and develop it. I hope so, for this is mighty impressive.

A side note. Fatima Rabai sized up the quality of (some of) our group and started herding and encouraging laggards and drifters. She's a real live wire and just what "we" need. Abdelkarim kindly recorded our cicerone's words on my recorder – this especially for Ajile, who teaches Ancient History and had so looked forward... Jerry K also video-recorded even more than usual, again, for her.

Pick up lunch (WATER WATER WATER for me) at entrance under umbrellaed tables. I investigated the shop, gave water to the owner and got two necklaces (malachite and amethyst), the last after both our driver, my loyal Achmed, and Nabil attacked him to make it clear I wasn't and shouldn't be paying too much! "She's not like the others," I caught. How nice!

Back to hotel via an overlook of (sacred) city of Moulay Idriss. (Looked pretty – white and clinging to hill and valley – but I didn't quite "get" why we just looked.)

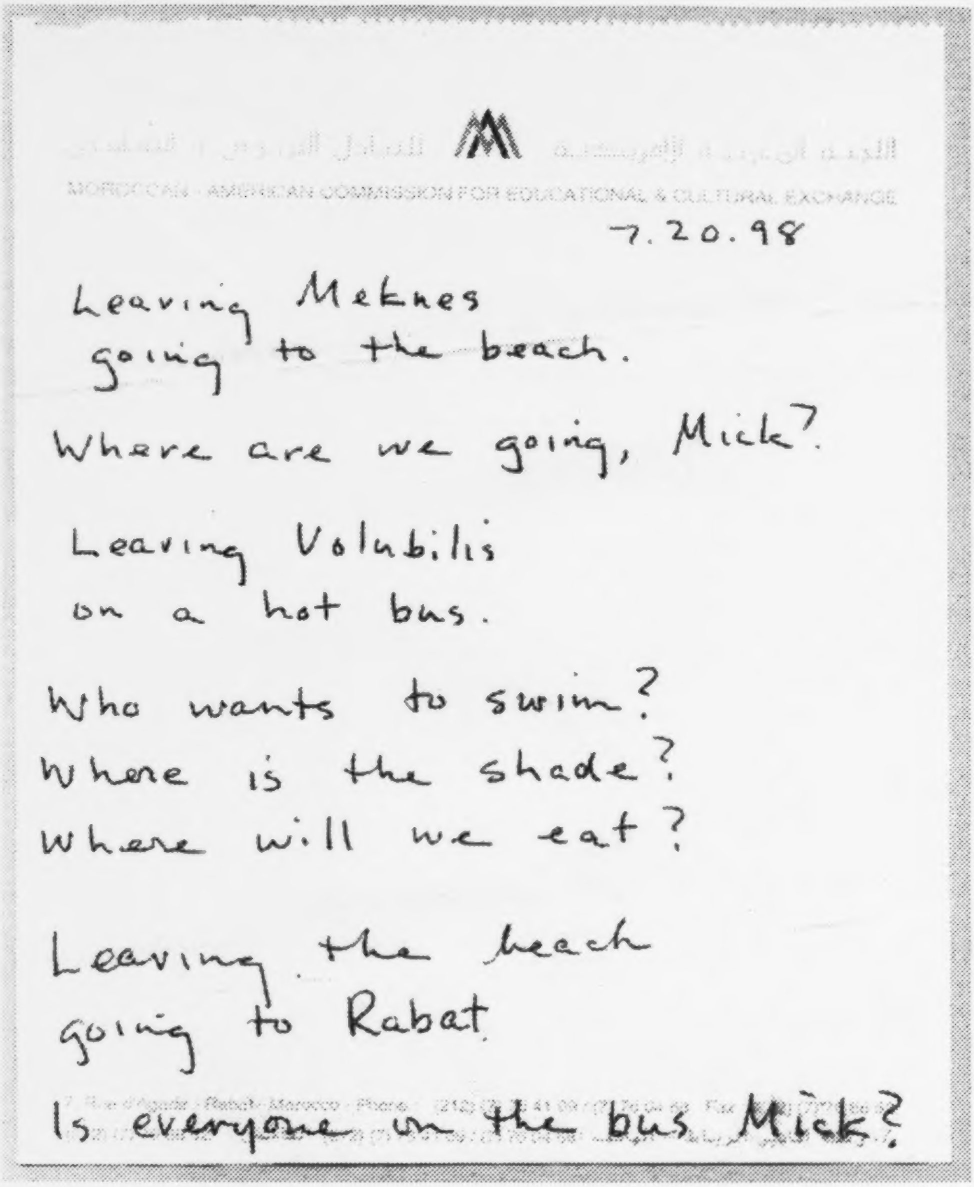
[Editorial note: As I remember Fatima Casewit's explanation for the bypass of Moulay Idriss, it was because the village was not "tourist friendly," having had in the past incidents of tourist abuse. Or, perhaps, it was simply a case of the ever-intuitive and maternal Lady Fatima recognizing our near exhaustion and desire to return to our seductive AC's... Whichever the case, I recall no complaints.]

At the hotel, Fatima Rabai napped *chez moi* and Abdelkarim and I enjoyed a long cool good talk on a private terrace. And then, it was time for them to leave – hugs and kisses and assurances of return and welcome – and I fled – only to find Fatima had packed up "huge" buckets of her special halva-like stuff for Ajile and me – IF I can get it home. I feel lucky to be so cherished by such special folk. I miss them already and always.

The evening? An orgy of TV documentaries on the returns (alive and dead) of Grand Duke Dmitry to St. Petersburg – and other films on assorted Romanovs. A nice relaxing change of pace.

DAY 27: MONDAY, JULY 20 -- MEKNES, RABAT

ALBA DE LEON



MOROCCAN - AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL EXCHANGE

7.20.98

Leaving Meknes
going to the beach.

Where are we going, Mick?

Leaving Volubilis
on a hot bus.

Who wants to swim?
Where is the shade?
Where will we eat?

Leaving the beach
going to Rabat

Is everyone on the bus Mick?

DAY 28: TUESDAY, JULY 21 -- RABAT

ELIZABETH MOOSE

Not too early Alba and I walk to the Fulbright office to check with Carl about our upcoming interviews. I'm trying to track down copies of Year of the Elephant, a novel by Leila Abouzeid, with whom Ann and I will get to talk next week. I want to be able to read her book so I can at least TRY to ask intelligent questions!

Later Alba and I head for the medina to shop for jewelry. We find some interesting shops, and both of us are eager to poke around, but Alba gets to feeling ill -- headache, stomach pains. Ever a trooper, she tries to keep going, but when it's clear she's feeling worse by the minute, we ditch the shopping trip and head back to the hotel (buying some beautiful fruit from the fruit seller right inside the old city walls).

In the evening, I walk to the medina again, this time by myself. At the Maison d'Argent I buy a silver necklace for M. Maybe it's the lights, the noise, all the buying and selling going on, the press of the crowd -- but I don't feel lonesome this time, even though I am walking alone. I see these beautiful faces, I hear the music of these voices, I smell the rich scents of these bodies -- and I know with each step that this moment, like all our other moments in Morocco, is passing and will never come again. Yet in this moment that I cannot hold but only live in and move through, I feel connected to the bigger world, the world that sweats and suffers and cries and begs for food and goes to bed hungry and eats and laughs and sings and pulses with life, with LIFE. And I know that I will still feel part of this world even when I return to my smaller existence in Durham. For I tell myself that this greater world is there for all of us, always, whenever we remember to open our eyes and minds and hearts to its existence.

DAY 29: WEDNESDAY, JULY 22 -- RABAT
PETER HESS

My kingdom for a bowl of cereal with cold milk, topped by fresh strawberries. Nope, it's two croissants and a piece of bread...again.

Today our ranks were depleted. A doctor visited the hotel and diagnosed Alba, Jacob and Tim with tonsillitis, heat stroke and bronchitis, respectively. Part of the prescription was a dozen bottles of Sidi Ali. The remaining twelve, in various states of disrepair, ventured off to the archeological museum. After an interesting hour, including artifacts from the Volubilis site we had just visited, the group dispersed. Mick and Elizabeth made a successful dash to an English bookstore, others walked back to the hotel, and the rest of us rode the bus back.

The afternoon session focused on civic education and the efforts of AFAK, an NGO headed by a former Minister of Health. We concluded the afternoon with a presentation by Faris and Nabil on their school experiences. After the session we received our final allowances...just in time for many of us and for the Moroccan economy as Dinker geared up to hit the souq again.

DAY 30: THURSDAY, JULY 23 -- RABAT
AARON BRAUN

This morning finds Tim and Alba recovering, with Jacob still very much immobilized by a bout with bronchitis. Peter is perpetual. [Upon return to the States, his condition during the seminar is diagnosed as thyroiditis, and, as of early September, he has totally recovered as well as regained ten of his twenty lost pounds.]

At breakfast, the waitress who has caused me to avert my gaze from fellow diners all too often, has her hair down this morning, prompting me to do the same. Sad to say, she rebuffs my offer of a visa to New York with a delicious giggle...aided by Papa John Cabe's entirely inexplicable chirping of "NO! DON'T GO WITH HIM!!!"

Stunned, I nevertheless listen as Betty informs us that the orange juice we've been drinking every morning is often diluted with tap water. Perhaps this is the culprit responsible for the recent rash of illnesses... I had just the other day received a benumbing email from a high school associate, revealing the news of another's death, at age 46, cancer of the brain, and Betty's revelation resonates...

Elizabeth, Ann and I take a cab from the Annakhil to the Supermarche Champion in Hay Riad, a Rabat suburb, arriving at 9:35 for a 10 A.M. rendezvous with film director, Abderrahmane Tazi. The heat is overwhelming and the intrepid Elizabeth ventures out to a public phone to call Carl when, well after 11 A.M., Tazi has not yet shown. Carl contacts Tazi, who had driven by the rendezvous, expecting his three guests to be waiting in the grueling morning sun rather than taking shelter [while remaining visible (!)] on the cafe porch.

At 11:30, Mr. Tazi arrives and drives us over to his nearby villa where we meet his wife, their infant son and his 12-year-old daughter from a previous marriage. I am struck by the discrepancy in age between Tazi and his bewitching younger mate - Allah be praised, Maroc is certainly a pleasant country for the fortunate and successful.

The interview is somewhat labored, despite Mr. Tazi's cool and graceful manner. Perhaps it is Ann's ever present tape-recorder and her praise/qualifier-filled rhetorical manner that adds this dimension, but Elizabeth and I have both downed our host's gracious offering of mint tea when a telephone call briefly interrupts our chat, and Ann's tea remains untouched.

Although Mr. Tazi's command of the English language is noticeably proficient, most of the questions are offered in French, and, alas, so are the responses. When, during the telephone break, I ask Ann to ask her questions in English so that I might understand, she assures me that the import of Tazi's responses would be irretrievably lost if rendered in boorish American, and promises to translate the tape for us at a later date...

We take leave of Mr. Tazi with a joint lament that we had met him without having screened any of his films before the interview, intent on correcting this sad situation as soon as possible...

At 3 P.M. [Fulbright time, of course], Ten Little Indians sally forth to the Sale Women's Center, the ENDA Maghreb local community association. We had earlier lost Ajile to a death in her family and become 15 l'il Indians. At this outing, we have Jacoob Effendi bedridden, Alba, Pete and Tim wisely resting rather than travelling, for their illnesses were quite severe, and Lurana engaged in an emergency dental appointment - Hence, our original gang of 16 has me humming Harry Nilsson's "Ten Little Indians" all through the short bus ride over.

As we drive, cannot help but notice Papa John Cabe sitting by his lonesome in the back of the bus... "...And then there was one..."

Mick offers an exchange he had at his morning project meeting with Daoud Casewit:

Mick: Would you have entered Islam in any other cultural milieu other than Maroc? Saudi Arabia, for instance?

Daoud: No. Other cultures were too rigid and legalistic... And Maroc offered such pleasing aesthetics as its mosque architecture vs. the Saudi modernism...

Odd note scribbled in my pad during this bus ride, unfathomable at this writing:

> "Dink takes a lemon whiz on bus..."

[If anyone can clarify this one for me, it would be greatly appreciated.]

At 3:20 we arrive at the Naqasha Women's Center, where a round table in slightly cramped, hot surroundings, amidst looms and storage rooms, reveals some NGO info about the creation of this particular one in 1972, after the Stockholm conference, somewhere in "the South." Urban population growth, unemployment, poverty are but three problems this NGO strives to address. Slides, graphs and wares are screened and displayed.

Water passed around. Betty dozes. More water...

We walk around the center, visit a couple of classrooms, where the kids are absolutely delicious. Pastries [also quite delicious], and mint tea are generously offered as the ten l'il Indians embark on a shopping spree with a mission. Unlike the souqs, we have in front of us the actual artisans responsible for the varied wares, rugs, bags, decorative pieces, each made from scraps of material, odds and ends. The motif of fish seems prevalent... I purchase a bag; someone in the group, remarking on the coarseness of the goods, suggests it would make a grand beach bag. Elizabeth is joined by the Dink in one of the storage rooms as she, with inimitable grace, connects with these smiling faces, exacting from them ever more exuberant smiles... Note: Over a month later, while visiting Durham, I am delighted to see one of these throw rugs [with fish motif], splayed out proudly. Along with Fatima's gift, I would venture that the items at this NGO were Elizabeth's happiest purchases...

Taking our leave, I am horrified by the sight of a grossly malnourished and sickly horse next to our bus, further horrified by the sight of one of Sale's gamins, who I had befriended outside of the Center, hurling a rock at this horse. I don't know whether it's my blanched expression or Fatima's keen eye, but Fatima senses my consternation and proceeds, bless her, to look for the horse's owner and attempt to rectify the horror... You could not, could you, dear Fatima?

I may not have emerged from Maroc with the affection for the country that I had hoped for, but the image of your laudable attempt to remedy the futile is that which very nearly vanquishes the horror. I thank you for that, Fatima.

After dinner, the notorious Annakhil lobby provides whimsical discussion of the world's oldest profession and its particular Islamic ethos here. Jerry S, Elizabeth and I ponder the enigma over beer and ice cream... One particularly provocative lady of the evening is noticed as a 'regular' and dubbed "Cleavage" for the rest of our stay...

The next morning, Mary offers one of the lovelier lines of our trip, in response to my "mind if I smoke?":

"I prefer sitting in the smoking section(s) because I hate the smell of sanctimoniousness."

Bravo, Mary!

DAY 31: FRIDAY, JULY 24, 1998 -- RABAT

TIM SCHORN

How fortuitous, I've "rejoined" the group on the same day that I'm responsible for the journal. I've never felt so crappy for such a long period of time in my life. The fact that I thought I had recovered fully the last time I wrote the journal entry *du jour* tells me that maybe my feelings of victory and optimism are misplaced. I guess if I feel sick I'll just have to continue to banish myself to the back of the bus in order to make myself feel better by taking it out on John, Peter, and Aaron.

I feel I've missed so much during my sick time. There's a good deal of Morocco I didn't see because of having to stay in my hotel room. So many of us seem to have gotten sick. The Annakhil Hotel is now more like a hospital ward rather than the brothel it really doubles as, especially with a local doctor making the rounds. Although maybe he visits here often with mega-doses of penicillin for the "working women" that frequent the lobby and bar. While Fatima (Casewit) Nightingale's kindness may go unrewarded in this world I'm sure it won't in the next. She has taken such good care of those of us living with DeGaulle's revenge and other maladies. I'm sure any bug we pick up was simply left here by the French as a reminder that they were able to screw things up in Africa as well as they did in Asia and elsewhere.

I have decided that a person must take Morocco, probably like any developing country, on its own terms. Trying to take it on your terms will just leave you impatient and frustrated. The service, hit and miss menus, traffic, etc., are all things that grate against our American sensitivities and sensibilities. But if we wanted to be where the trains run on time, we should have gone to Germany. I have learned two important lessons: Don't visit North Africa in July. And not drinking the water doesn't always help.

Today we visited parliament. As a student and teacher of comparative politics, a whole host of questions comes to mind even before stepping into the building. How effective is the body? Does its power depend on agreement with the King? Does it serve as a real means of articulating and aggregating the ideas, concerns, and opinions of the Moroccan people and groups? On paper, figuratively speaking, it is set up to serve the varied interests quite effectively. The chamber itself is quite grand. The expert craftsmen created something beautiful, stately, and functional. The fact, though, that Moroccans aren't able to visit the Parliament themselves and are able to see it only on TV concerns me a bit. That has to create a bit of a disconnect between the people and their elected officials. It reinforces the idea of elitism that is present in Moroccan politics, something that is reinforced by the very notion of an active monarchy.

The presentation by the representatives of the European Union, and the EU support for Moroccan civil society, was also quite informative for me. The future of Morocco might depend on the type of civil society it is able to develop and the relationship between Morocco and the EU. The questions that came to me about the efficacy of Parliament are also pertinent here. How much influence will organizations that fill the gap between government and the people actually have? The EU will demand much greater transparency in business and government in Morocco than that which is present now. The corruption and secrecy that envelops these aspects of Moroccan society will have to change before Morocco can become competitive and freer.

This was a day that will serve me well as I prepare for my classes that cover Morocco. I really enjoyed the trip to Parliament. I could have spent much more time there. I also would have liked to have talked to members of the government and parliament. Maybe next time.

DAY 31: FRIDAY, JULY 24 -- RABAT

BETTY LAU

About 5:00 we headed for Fatima Mernissi's beachfront home on our trusty bus. I had never heard of her. Mary thoroughly informed me. Curious, I went to a bookstore and bought two of her books. Jerry K bought one for his daughter. According to Mary, Fatima Mernissi is the foremost feminist writer of the Islamic world. I did not know what to expect, but as the visit grew nearer, I became more and more excited. I read *The Veil and the Male Elite* for the visit.

Her home was a white, rectangular cottage with a sitting room facing the beach and living quarters in the rear. We overflowed from the sitting room to the living room, packed tightly with her friends. I felt I was in the presence of a *grande dame*. Mernissi was the ever-gracious hostess, treating us as though we were long lost friends. She had us all introduce ourselves, and then we sat down for tea, snacks and conversation. Her circle of friends was impressive: a supreme court lawyer, a publisher, the head of a women's advocacy group, a university professor, and others. She continuously pulled them into the conversation and included them in discussions. After a while, I noticed Mernissi was not feeling her best and thought it gallant of her to have us in her home.

We were able to be there thanks to Daoud Casewit, who got into a lively debate with one of the women on women's rights. He started to say that women's rights in the U.S. were responsible for welfare moms, divorce and.... then he noticed some of us paying close attention to what he was saying. Then he switched to French, but knowing that a couple of teachers in our group spoke French, he switched to Arabic. When I managed to break in to ask for a translation, he declined, saying it was too much. I thought it strange that he insisted on correct, literal translations in other presentations, yet would not translate here.

Fatima Mernissi autographed the books we brought, and the best inscription went to Jerry K's daughter.

DAY 32: SATURDAY, JULY 25 -- RABAT

JERRY KAMINSKI

I began this day in Rabat as I had begun all of my days in this imperial city. I woke up two and one-half hours before our lecture. I dressed into my hiking boots and shorts. I walked down to the front entrance of our hotel. I stretched my body in all directions. And then, I waited to see who else might join me for an early-morning trek through this waking city. Today Betty proved to be the only person healthy enough to join me. Mary had an ankle problem; Alba still suffered from her infection, and my roommate Jacob had become too fond of his sweet dreams to get up and out of bed.

Since Betty had not seen the Moroccan cavalry training arena at the Royal Palace, we decided to make that our destination. Our choice proved to be the right one. When we arrived, raw recruits were riding their mounts through the gates. When we tried for a better view, a policeman ordered us back onto the sidewalk. I guess he thought we might be either a security risk or too much of a distraction for the troops. At any rate, we watched the activity from a big hole in the hedges. Betty turned out to be an expert on horses, and she filled my ears with the most entertaining bits and pieces of information on the subject as we made our way back to the hotel. Our morning walk lasted about an hour and covered about three and a half miles.

When we returned to the hotel, I ate breakfast and waited for Jacob to come down with the key to our room. We had worked out this routine to avoid getting into each other's way as we performed our morning ablutions and dressed. The system worked perfectly too, except once when Jacob overslept. But, notwithstanding that episode, Jacob proved to be the best possible roommate. He was considerate, kind, and entertaining. I know I acquired a greater understanding of the Arab world listening to Jacob's stories about growing up in Jerusalem, about traveling through the Persian Gulf, and about teaching Middle East studies at the Air Force Academy. He's a great guy and a good friend.

I don't remember much about our nine o'clock lecture on the Entraide Nationale. At this point in the seminar I had become super-saturated with information about NGOs. I felt like I had when I was a college student travelling through Europe and visiting churches. After about the tenth cathedral I had overdosed and my whole memory of churches blended into one huge structure. I admire Ann for her ability to stay focused on the concept of civil society all the way through our five-week program. Even at the end when the rest of us were fading, she could still strike an attentive pose and ask an eloquent question. I'll never forget the impressive presentation she made of the Rotarian flag to that Fassi philanthropist.

I don't remember much either about the afternoon lecture this day. My notes do show one entry though: "Amsaid fights for the well-being of the poor." I hope that is helpful to somebody.

For me this day ended beautifully with a walk to Agdal and dinner. Mary, Betty, and I trekked to the suburb of Agdal, which is where Carl lives, and met up with John and Jacob at a Chinese restaurant. Betty was researching the Chinese Diaspora while the rest of us were just searching for good food. The food turned out to be mediocre and confirmed an observation that we had made concerning Chinese restaurants in Morocco in general; that is, that the quality of the food is average or worse and the proportions are small while the prices are high. We need to remember this for our return trip to Morocco.

We all decided to walk back to our hotel. As we strolled back on this balmy night, just four days before our departure, I think we all were truly enjoying Morocco and the seminar. It wasn't a perfect experience, but it was relaxing and stimulating. Moreover, I don't believe that any of us retained any of those initial fears that developed when we first arrived. Now, we were comfortable and at ease on the sidewalks of the city. And on the way to our hotel we took the opportunity to collect everlasting images and memories of the city: its walls and arches, its mosques and minarets, and its people: the traditionalists and modernists, the merchants and bureaucrats, and the peasants and bourgeoisie.

But as much as I will remember the Moroccan culture we all studied, I will certainly never forget the members of our Fulbright group and their engaging personalities:

Jacob: I predict that when he retires from the Air Force Academy he will lead guided tours throughout the Arab world. His skills as an Arabic speaker and his experiences in Arab countries will make him the most highly qualified and sought-after guide around. Meeting new people will keep him young, handsome, and happy.

Ajile: If anyone goes to heaven, it will be Ajile. She's one of the most genuinely devout and spiritual people I have met. I learned more about Islam from her stories and the way she leads her life than I could from any book.

Lurana: I was amazed by the amount of stuff that Lurana bought, not for herself, but for others. I think she purchased something for all of her friends and most of her students. She's truly a kind and generous friend; students who have her as a teacher should consider themselves very lucky.

Aaron: His knowledge of the cinema will be eclipsed only by the number of cigarettes he smokes in his life. God willing, Aaron will lead a long life and entertain countless students with his Hollywood impersonations and his pioneering work in the world of Moroccan cinema that he began on our seminar.

John: Could anyone be more relaxed and laid back than John? I bet he even has a rocker behind his desk at school.

Alba: She's the quintessential artist: her mind constantly shapes and reshapes arrangements as she searches for new ideas of artistic expression. And, when she finds something that is especially outstanding, she lets out with her identifiable giggle that resonates loudly and clearly.

Ann: She speaks poetry. And she's one of the most polite and gracious ladies I've ever met. I can't wait to read her book on film when it's published.

Peter: I'd love to coach a baseball team with Peter. But, failing that, maybe we can at least play a game of catch or strikeout box the next time we get together. I'll never forget the misery we shared during our homestay when our host threw a late-night party on a hot evening when the both of us were terribly sick.

Betty: I won't remember Betty for the hundreds of slide photos she took of Arabic tile patterns; I'll remember her for the great stories she told about her travels and life in China. Some day I expect Betty will receive a civic award from the city of Seattle for all of the work she has done for the city's Chinese community and for the home that she has provided for nine foster kids. Betty doesn't have a selfish bone in her body.

[Editorial note: Actually, Betty HAS received such awards. Just last May, she was awarded the International Examiner Community Voice Award for "Exemplary Service to the Asian Pacific community" for over 20 years of advocacy for immigrant and refugee kids. In 1994, she received one of the Northwest Asian Weekly's "Top Ten Community Volunteers" awards... and she has provided for not nine, but thirteen(!) foster children.

No surprise here. We all knew we were privileged to be travelling with some 'exemplary individuals,' but this note ought serve as partial explanation for the grand dame's voracious appetite... With all that this lady does above and beyond the call, she NEEDS to keep her strength up!]

Mick: I never saw Mick without a smile. He's a genuinely happy person who got along well with everyone. I'm sorry I missed video taping his presentation of Fatima's gift; that was truly one of the most glorious moments of the seminar.

Elizabeth: I think she touched all of our hearts with her kindness. When the rest of us were frozen stiff by the sight of the medina merchant beating the beggar lady with a stick, Elizabeth comforted her with a hug and some money. She never hesitated to embrace and befriend any of the Moroccans she met.

Dinker: He never met a Moroccan merchant he didn't like. I learned some valuable lessons on how to haggle from Dinker; I regret not video taping him in action.

Tim: I enjoyed his wry sense of humor. I wish he had been healthier to join us in some of our escapades; I'm sure he would have enlivened things up quite a bit.

Jerry S.: He fell in love with the Moroccan sun. I enjoyed Jerry S. when he fired off those penetrating questions at some of our speakers; he tried to keep them honest. I thought his dance at the Fantasia brilliant.

Mary: I think that Mary had more daring -- do than anybody else did on our seminar. As a seasoned world traveler, compliments of the US Army, she had the ability and confidence to handle any situation. If she had had a good ankle, I think she would have presented our morning walkers with some interesting challenges.

Fatima: I knew that no matter what happened, Fatima would be able to deal with it. This knowledge gave me a sense of security that I can only relate to my days back in first grade. I appreciate Fatima's solicitude immensely.

Carl: I hope that someday he will allow me to buy him a beer in Chicago. I know that if he had had the power we would have done a lot more on our Moroccan seminar. I still can't believe that he lives without a refrigerator and telephone in his apartment.

[Editorial Note: Aye, but in late October early November '98, after acquiring a much-deserved raise in salary, Carl partially joined the 20th Century, purchasing both a TV and a satellite dish!]

[Carl's note: and I'm in media heaven...]

DAY 33: SUNDAY, JULY 26 -- RABAT

BETTY LAU

Munching Through Morocco III, or *Ruminations on Magical Moments That Stand Out in My Memory, Such as Trying to Miss Two Out of Three Lectures on a Hot Day*

Today was a toughie, three lectures. To adequately prepare for so much sitting, I decided to join the early bird walking group. Mary, Alba and Jacob didn't feel up to it, so it was just Jerry K and me. We headed for Salé via the Mausoleum of Mohammed V. Just before reaching it, however, we watched a wedding party finishing up a photo shoot on the edge of the bluff and escorting the happy couple back to back to the cars. And then we passed another wedding party, and then another. The brides all wore Western-style white wedding gowns, and the grooms wore suits and ties. The young women who accompanied the couples were ululating. We wondered if the couples had married in the mosque or were married elsewhere and had come here for photos.

Salé before seven is quiet and peaceful. Soft sunlight creeps over the buildings, interspersed with the shapes of cool shadows. Although I tried, I knew that no photograph could properly capture the images or the moods. (And as it turned out, I was right.)

At the first open shop that we saw, Jerry dickered for two pairs of earrings and a necklace. He asked the price of one pair of earrings. The shopkeeper spoke neither English nor French, so he fetched a French-speaking friend over to speak with us. To make things absolutely clear, the shopkeeper also wrote a third price on a scrap of paper. Jerry added another pair of earrings to the first. The shopkeeper wrote a price double the first. Jerry asked the price of a necklace. The shopkeeper jotted its price. Jerry and I paused to discuss it. Then he added the necklace to the earrings and asked the price of all three. The shopkeeper wrote something less than the sum of the total. The deal was done. Way to go, Jerry!

To check the reality of the prices, I asked how much the men's jellabas were. The answer from the friend was 120 dirhams, the same as in Chefchaouen. It confirmed what I thought about the shop -- very reasonable prices.

As we left, we couldn't help but wonder how the man could earn a living with a shop hardly bigger than a small walk-in closet. Surely he couldn't sell enough trinkets and jelabas to make a decent living from month to month.

Meandering through the medina, we gave up all pretense at trying to stay oriented. We traversed the most interesting twists and turns, all the while observing farmers setting out produce, crafts people opening shops, and merchants arranging household wares.

Surprisingly, we exited the medina close to the gate where we had entered. Checking my watch, I sadly realized there was still enough time to scoot back to the hotel, eat, clean up and race for the commission. Secretly, I had hoped to get lost for at least two out of the three lectures.

When I heard Prof. Hassan Aourid, however, I was glad we hadn't gotten lost. He spoke of the discrimination against Berbers (e.g., babies' names must be selected from an official list which does not include Berber names) and of the women's movement. What he said tied in with what my homestay hostess had said about civil laws regarding women. I had asked her what marriage laws had been changed for the better, and she said that men now have to inform their wives when they divorce them. Some men would shame their wives by continuing to live with them after divorcing them without their knowledge.

During the third lecture, my thoughts drifted to last night's dinner. A group of us decided to eat at a Chinese restaurant in the Agdal neighborhood where Carl lives. Jerry K wanted to walk. Mary and I escorted him so he wouldn't get propositioned again. Others decided to take a cab and join us at the restaurant later. The cab riders arrived just about the same time as we walkers. Like the Dragon d'Or, the portions were small and expensive. However, the fare was much tastier. My homestay hostess had related that Chinese restaurants are rare and therefore cater to the wealthy. It reminded me of a Chinese restaurant in Lusaka, Zambia which had a similar clientele, at least until I wandered in with some of our Fulbright '92 group. I wonder if that's the case with all Chinese restaurants in Africa.

The two Chinese restaurants we have eaten at so far are actually owned by Vietnamese families who re-settled here during the Vietnam War. I wondered why a Vietnamese family would not start a Vietnamese restaurant.

The last lecture over, a group of us piled onto the bus for a final field trip to Nations Plage, a nearby beach. Crowded with the usual assortment of males, the beach had very few women in bathing suits. We opted to explore the rockier, less crowded section where we were rewarded by small tidal pools filled with tiny anemones, crabs and seaweed. Two women in jelabas and scarves frolicked in the waves with their toddlers. Like Volubilis, the sun didn't set; it melted into the mist hanging over the horizon. I passed a mature couple in western swimsuits giving each other an affectionate kiss. It gave me hope that someday, women and girls will be able to frequent the beaches with the same freedom enjoyed by males.

Additional Notes: Aaron reports that Fatima is wearing shorts today and that micky-mick means so-so in Arabic.

Alba: She and Mick attend mass at St. Peter's. Twenty people, mostly elderly French and other Europeans, cluster behind the main altar in three pews.

DAY 34: MONDAY, JULY 27 -- RABAT

AARON BRAUN

After breakfast, Elizabeth, Ann and I meet Fatima at the Commission at 9:30. She's late... Faris and Nabil had just been dropped off at the bus station where they've embarked on a three-day ride to Paris... Fatima is still somewhat nervous about her eldest boy, despite his rapid maturation while in the company of such esteemed American scholars as ourselves...

Fatima is one of those drivers who hunches forward at the wheel, doesn't strictly keep in the lane...

We arrive (safely) at the office of Abdelkader Hallaoui, Director of the Production Division at the Moroccan Film Center for a round table with some other production chiefs. Fatima's introductions are quite elaborate...each of us sounds so impressive... Hell, I nearly don't recognize myself.

Ann begins a spirited discourse about the sad state of affairs in the distribution of Moroccan titles in the U.S. As much of her offering is in French, I step out to answer a nicotine call... Elizabeth inquires as to available titles in English that would work into her curriculum at home. She is later graciously provided a list. Ann animatedly asks about the transfer of these titles into NTSC. One of the production heads joins me outside for a second smoke... On returning, I ask about the archives. Ann continues to attempt to secure some titles for her school, explaining that they are unavailable in the States... Elizabeth peruses the just delivered list of available English-subtitled films. Ann inquires as to the possibility of securing some English subtitled Moroccan films... I ask about the archives. It is suggested to Ann that she look at a list of English subtitled films, read their synopses and select. I look at a list of productions filmed in Morocco. It is quite impressive, from LAWRENCE OF ARABIA to THE SHELTERING SKY. I remember reading of these titles in The Lonely Planet. Ann asks about the shipment of subtitled VHS cassettes to her school. Rather than step out of a meeting in progress four times, I opt for chain-smoking numbers three and four in this last break. It's July 27th, and the seminar is into its fifth week... This is not the time to contemplate kicking the habit.

The meeting ends and we are ushered over to the archives, situated in the same building as the sound booths and post-production facilities. As we walk, I ask Ann if she might consider asking her questions of the archivist in English, that I might understand. She replies that there are certain phrases that could only be served properly in French, losing their *puissance*, if you will, when rendered in English.

The archivist, also named Fatima, is enchanting and most dedicated, as noted by Elizabeth, who points out a sign atop a door leading to film storage rooms. The sign speaks to the universal sentiment of film archivists who are well aware of their role in the preservation, not just of mere celluloid, but of a cultural heritage. Fatima's enthusiasm and animation strikes a chord in me, and I am moved by her impassioned sincerity. I cannot help but think of Artie Wehrhahn, MOMA's version of Fatima, and consider how fortunate we are in having such dedicated champions.

The only downbeat chord is struck when, commenting on the unfinished archive, with cooling systems not yet completed for the preservation of color film stock, Fatima's echo of countless NGOs rings suspiciously hollow. The system, says she, is scheduled for completion in December of '98. It is a work yet in progress, as have been various NGO agendas paraded before us over the past month. But, inasmuch as Fatima is a lay archivist rather than an ostentatious cultural representative, I choose to embrace her claim.

As we are led through the production facilities, the sound booths, the foley studio and various screening rooms, we are introduced to a young woman diligently inputting data into a computer. Her task, we are shown, is to record scene by scene, indeed shot-by-shot, the entirety of a film [any film in their collection], into a network of data, by subject, action or theme. This is state-of-the-art to me... I imagine future academics or filmmakers either seeking out information or stock footage and having access to such a trove... Fatima's enthusiasm has entirely rubbed off on me...

Fatima [Casewit] returns us to the Annakhil. I am now proud owner of a Casewit "old bag," as she refers to her offering to the group of various old luggage with which to transport our souvenirs, knicks, knacks and other such purchased possessions over the past month.

I lunch at the American Club. As I approach my table, I hear Sarah Casewit: "It's the smoker!!!!" from the swings in the distance. She's with a group of her friends, about to embark on a day at the movies, though she doesn't know which as yet.

Peter had remarked the other day that he wished he'd realized the American Club was available for meals throughout our Rabat stays. As I order my grilled cheese and salad, to a backdrop of English tongues, I agree with my esteemed, ailing colleague and resolve to restore whatever semblance of calm to my remaining days as I could muster...

To that effect, I drop in on Carl at the Commission to check for email and beg out of my 4 P.M. meeting with Latifa Toujani, the exquisite artist met earlier in Chefchaouen... [I later discover that the Dink had also opted out of it, leaving Carl and Alba to fend for themselves.]

With the free afternoon, I find myself rehashing events at the Cinema Center. I call Elizabeth and ask for her thoughts... Recognizing my turmoil, and given her generosity of spirit, she bops down to the room and we talk out on the patio about various pressures and discomforts of the seminar. A few cigarettes later, her innate calm restores mine and we agree that "burn out is an awful state..." [I'm eternally grateful to you, dear Elizabeth, for that afternoon, and wish to hell I'd been able to do the same for you when you were overwhelmed by the "l'il rabbits" of the Fes Artisan's Workshop... If I could relive that moment, it would be my shoulder rather than my back that I would offer... Please forgive me.]

The 7 P.M. Reception farewell at the Commission... ACCCHHHHHHH! Daoud Casewit is in finest form as various members of Morocco '98 are trotted into the Commission walls in an Islamic version of THIS IS YOUR LIFE [FULBRIGHTERS...] Former lectures and tours, meetings and festivities are recalled as the Commission hosts an absolutely delicious "feel good" reception. Those who have grown fond of one another display a 'cool' comfort and grace in so expressing their fondness...those who have not, display a like 'cool.' I, personally, have never felt better within these hallowed halls.

Daoud asks for a photo shoot with Abderrahmane Tazi and his three American friends... Elizabeth, Ann and I gladly accommodate, particularly as this extraordinarily sweet man has been so gracious as to bring along an English-titled VHS cassette of his SEARCHING FOR MY WIFE'S HUSBAND, the screening of which is to be the post-reception activity this evening. Tazi has also brought his bewitching wife and 12 year old daughter, and I fondly recall the better moments of that morning rendezvous four days earlier. Ann takes her camera out as well, and in animated fashion, promises to send us copies while thanking Mr. Tazi for his cassette.

All the guests leave, and the Commission is quickly transformed into a wonderfully homey makeshift theater... Carl, the two youngest Casewits, Elizabeth, Mick, Jacob, Alba, the Dink and I settle in for an often hilarious little comedy, with left-over hors d'oeuvres as our popcorn for the show. We are joined by one of the Commission workers, Fatima [Jeez...how many Fatimas have we encountered in 5 weeks' time?], who proceeds to punctuate the great wit and social commentary of Mr. Tazi's work with uncannily silent belly laughs. When Mick first points out her guarded hysterics, I am first horrified that she is either weeping or in seizure. Upon realizing that she is reacting to the pompous hero's "comeuppance" in what can be characterized as a traditional female's glee in watching the tables turned on a haughty traditional male, I silently salute Mr. Tazi for sharing his gem with his new friends.

There is a certain *je ne sais quoi* about the narrative tone of SEARCHING FOR MY WIFE'S HUSBAND that I'm sorry some of the Fulbrighters miss. Those in attendance that night are regaled by a biting expression of that conflict between the modern and traditional in Maroc that we have witnessed over the weeks. It also possesses a certain honesty and forthrightness that puts the lie to fundamentalist truisms that permeate Maroc society and its treatment of women. It is contained in the narrative images and sounds on screen, certainly, but more so in Fatima's convulsions of recognition and delight. An ocean and thousands of miles are bridged that evening, as a contemporary Moroccan artist is joined aesthetically with a Southern dramatist named Tennessee in bellowing out their indignation:

What do you know about this mendacity thing? Hell! I could write a book on it! Don't you know that? I could write a book on it and still not cover the subject? Well, I could, I could write a goddam book on it and still not cover the subject anywhere near enough!! Think of all the lies I got to put up with! Pretenses! Ain't that mendacity? Having to pretend stuff you don't think or feel or have any idea of?... Pretend to love that son of a bitch Gooper and his wife Mae and those five same screechers out there like parrots in a jungle? Jesus! Can't stand to look at 'em! Church! - it bores the Bejesus out of me but I go! - I go an' sit there and listen to the fool preacher! Clubs! - Elks! Masons! Rotary! - crap!... I've lived with mendacity! - Why can't you live with it? Hell, you got to live with it, there's nothing else to live with except mendacity, is there?

- BIG DADDY in Act II of Tennessee Williams' CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF

'Cleavage' is at the Annakhil lobby upon our return. There's no time to dwell on her place in modern Maroc, for the mendacity is very nearly over... We're off to Casablanca in the morn.

DAY 35: TUESDAY, JULY 28 -- CASABLANCA

JANE FATIMA CASEWIT

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Today is the departure of the Fulbright Seminar on its final phase of our tour of Morocco. This complex seminar, a dream and design of my husband's and detailed and put together by Carl and me, planned by all of us, talked about and worked on for so many months, is now drawing to a close. As Moroccans often say: "Everything in this world passes." This includes earthly trials as well as good times, but more important is that we also pass on, no matter how many seminars we've conducted or participated in or how successful we've been in our careers, we're all moving steadily towards our final ends, the final leveling of souls.

However, I've been asked to write a journal about the 28th of July, the second to last day of the Fulbright-Hays 1998 Summer Seminar in Morocco. I haven't been asked to expound on eschatology, but I am tempted to include a few of my own thoughts, for whatever they're worth, because I haven't been able to have any real in-depth conversations with the participants about subjects which are really important to me, except of course, this country; and even on the topic of Morocco, I feel we've only just scratched the surface of the real issues.

We got off to our usual late start, despite my arising early and leaving the house in a frenzy. I don't think anyone was sad to leave the Annakhil Hotel. I suppose this choice was a mistake. If I had had to stay there, I certainly would have objected to the secondary business going on there of which Carl and I were ignorant when we chose the hotel. On my part, I probably underestimated the lodging expectations of most of the participants, coming from America where being comfortable is one of the major goals and expectations in life. Now that the seminar is behind them, I can only hope that when they return home, that the lack of American-style facilities in Morocco does not dominate their memories and learning experiences.

My heart sinks as we approach the ugly outskirts of this teeming city of Casablanca. Unlike Cairo, Casablanca has no redeeming factors and I despise it. Upon arrival at the Hassan II Mosque I run at top speed to obtain tickets for the last guided tour, all the while knowing what their reactions will be to this massive monumental marble-decked masterpiece. On a certain level, I share their predicted horror: the money could have been better spent elsewhere. On the other hand, I know that the monarchy is the best political system for this country at this time, and this mosque is a – I won't say small, but rather relative – price to pay for the maintenance of the system. That His Majesty is highly intelligent and politically astute in holding this country together is evident. What is more difficult for Westerners to understand, particularly for Americans for whom democracy is sacred, is the value of the institution of a monarchy in preserving a continuity of traditions and values which pervade the soul of a people and have a subtle effect on the stability of a nation, even in these times. I am also thinking here of the remaining European monarchies which have been maintained to this day and thanks to which, a certain dignity has been preserved in those countries.

From my humble understanding of traditional societies, a distinction must be made between the function or office of a monarch and his/her particular person. The presence of a monarch has seemed to maintain, until very recent times, a certain dignity of a state. The particular virtue of the Moroccan monarchy is that the blood lineage does go back to the Prophet of Islam (pbuh). This not only justifies and legitimises his function for Moroccans, but, despite his opulent palaces and mosques, his connection to the Prophet means that the king has a special connection to God through this inheritance. I cannot expect Americans to understand or accept this concept because the American system is staunchly based on a strict separation between church and state, which is the inverse of a traditional system of government.

Those who are wiser than I am have taught that within a traditional system of government where the ruler functioned as an Intermediary between Heaven and Earth, it was easier for the individual, as God's vice-regent on Earth, to fulfill his/her duties to God in this world and prepare for the next life which was considered infinitely more important than this one. Examples in point are the Chinese emperors who had special links with Heaven and performed special rites on behalf of the people. The Chinese character Wong

黄

is a symbol of this. Of course there were always hardships, upheavals, injustices and suffering in every civilisation, but there was also, by way of compensation, a certain social equilibrium and continuity that was held in place by the system of monarchy that enabled millions of souls to lead peaceful lives in this world and die in tranquillity and dignity.

To return to the 28th of July, we checked into the Windsor Hotel which hadn't changed a bit from the time I stayed there briefly with my dear parents, now passed away, several years ago. Upon entering the lobby I suddenly felt the overwhelming presence of my beloved mother and pictured her near the door swooping 3 year old Sarah up into her arms and offering her a Mexican rag doll to which she clung for weeks afterwards.

The ugliness of this city is so depressing, and as we start off on the long ride to the outlying suburbs of what is earthly inferno for millions of people, I reflect on how the modern world has so rapidly invaded this country and left its gaping wounds. Where is the "progress" and "prosperity" that Moroccans and other peoples are so greedily clamouring after? This grim area of the Casablanca suburbs epitomises the inhumane vileness of modern civilisation.

I suppose the key point is, that from what I have understood, the difference between modern civilisation and a traditional civilisation is that a traditional civilisation is based on a God-sent revelation such as the Hindu world, the Islamic world, the Christian world until the Renaissance, etc. People living in these civilisations profoundly knew (and some still know) that they were going to die, but that their souls were immortal and that they had to prepare themselves for the next life by accomplishing that which is pleasing to God in this life. Spiritual practices and preparing themselves for the next world took precedence over material "development" in this world. Now, it seems, everywhere in the world today the desire for material goods, entertainment and comfort have overridden spiritual values and the knowledge that we must all pass on to the next world. People no longer look to the next life. Even in Morocco where there is still strong faith in God, Western consumerism is rapidly taking the place of spiritual values.

Spiritual masters as well as the scriptures in every religion have all indicated the same warning: that we are rapidly approaching the end of a final cycle of humanity. And riding through this city, I cannot help believe that this is true and that God does not mean for this state of affairs to last indefinitely. Modern man in his greed to dominate the Earth rather than be God's vice-regent here (as the Native Americans were in such an exemplary way) has created hellish urban sprawls, destroyed the God-given environment surrounding us, and has produced a greed for consumer goods and comforts, turning luxuries into needs which everyone aspires to, and without which no one is satisfied. Street children are only one superficial symptom of the ills of a society which is in the process of throwing off its traditional values (in this case Islamic ones) and trying to replace them with modernism and the attitudes which it engenders. A classic example of this were our scantily clad hostesses at the Bayti Centre, aggressively declaring their "modernism" whilst trying to solve the very problems that modernism has brought on.

The knowledge of the appointed time for the final hour of the end of the world as we know it has not been granted to us - every sacred text tells us this. And all the scriptures describe signs of the last days before "the wrath of God spilleth over." It is fascinating that Hindu, Native American, Maori, Islamic traditions and others are quite clear and concur about the signs of the approach of the last days. I am more familiar with the Islamic tradition and don't have access in my hotel room to other references but I thought since a basic understanding of Islam is necessary to understand Morocco, it might be of interest to mention a few of the signs of the last hour (*alamat asa* -- for Mick and Jacob) mentioned by the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh).

One is the rapid spread of tall buildings. Another is prevalence of ignorance amongst the Muslim peoples. Another is staggering wealth amongst some sectors of society. Another is women trying to be like men and vice-versa. There are of course others but the point is that if we examine history as linear and evolutionary ("progressive") as has been done since the end of the nineteenth century, many unanswered questions confront us. The cyclical view and the assumption that there will eventually be a final destruction before a new order is established has been expounded upon by such philosophers and historians such as Plato, Ibn Khaldoun, Maimonides, and makes much more sense than the assumption that we are progressing towards an earthly paradise.

The Prophet Mohammed also said: "My people will follow the Christians and Jews as a snake follows its prey into a hole" or something to that effect. The social and economic problems in Morocco cannot be entirely blamed on colonialism or the government or the people but must be accepted as the natural consequences of Moroccans striving to adopt Westernism and modernism without discernment and thereby reaping the consequences. And such lack of discernment is also typical of our times.

Naturally, the argument against what I am trying to say is that there have always been social problems, everywhere. But it has been pointed out to me that what we are witnessing today is unprecedented in human history. Modern science and technology have undoubtedly brought with them advantages for the world but they have also produced unprecedented mass destruction, suffering, and misery. More importantly, modern science and technology have duped people into thinking that we are immortal supergods, capable of any achievement. People think that human genius will somehow get us out of our present impasse. God knows best but the predictions of the economists and demographers for the years to come are not positive and I can't help wondering whether the world in its present state will actually be around to witness the year 2010 that we've heard so much about.

Before he began his talk, Abdelhadi in Fes mentioned to me, "Don't you think secularism has killed civil society?" Indeed, under the traditional Islamic system, everyone, the poor, the sick, the aged, the mentally deranged, the disabled, etc. were looked after, within an all-encompassing social system based on the family unit, the *turuq* (the Sufi brotherhoods) and the guilds. NGOs were not needed! If we examine societies in other traditional civilisations, we see exactly the same thing: everyone was somehow cared for out of an innate sense of social duty which discouraged individualism but instilled most people with a sense of social responsibility. Most of the social ills that Morocco now faces did not exist when the traditional system was more intact. At least, such problems as we have examined during the course of the Seminar didn't exist on such a massive scale. And people dealt with them and fulfilled their social responsibilities out of a fear and love of God, and by extension an awareness of the needs of the neighbour, not for personal recognition.

The highly criticised (by our participants) Ali Raissouni in Chefchaouen is a living example of that kind of person. Rather than regarding the evening in Chefchaouen as us "being used" by Ali Raissouni, let's look upon it as our contribution to Morocco, a small sacrifice to be made for all the hospitality we received and let us recall that none of those present that evening were aiming for self aggrandisement or personal ambition. They had nothing to gain from it for themselves. They were all asking for help and working for the underprivileged of their communities: the children who attended the Koran schools, the preservation of the city of Chefchaouen, encouraging Spanish students to come to Morocco, setting up a centre for English language teaching for the youth of that city, etc. No one was thinking of their own gain, but rather the benefit of the community. Isn't that what we were supposed to be studying? If we sacrificed an evening which could have been spent drinking beer by the pool (after Carl and I had rearranged the schedule upon the participants' request to extend in Chefchaouen and asked Ali Raissouni to receive the participants in several different contexts) is that such a great imposition on our participants' time who had already received so much Moroccan hospitality? Yes, we were all "used," but for greater ends, and this is how the system works in its positive way. I might add that Helen Boyle, who went to great effort to help organise our visit and gave us much of her time, was also indebted to Ali Raissouni for his making the Koranic schools accessible to her and to us. She was also doing a favour for Usted Ali by helping to make the video for the patron of the Green Zaouia Association. Such experiences should be looked at objectively and from the Moroccan point of view, not from a subjective, American point of view. And an effort must be made at cross-cultural understanding, one of the great objectives of Fulbright grants. There it was that evening: a unique opportunity to strive for cross-cultural understanding and tolerance. I was amazed that the group ascribed such importance to themselves to the point that they were so insensitive and ungrateful and felt they were being "used."

As we strolled through Marrakesh, Abderrahman Fitzgerald remarked, "All these NGOs that are springing up are a bad sign - a sign that the very tissue of this society is breaking apart. NGOs are trying to replace the family and the traditional social structure."

Now I can just imagine the arguments of the Seminar participants reading this - far away on the other side of the Atlantic! Yes, among the disadvantages of that age, women were more secluded, many were uneducated, life expectancy was lower, etc. etc. However, women did not have to face the problems that "freedom" offers (witness the homeless prostitutes living in the second Bayti shelter we visited - they are "free"). They were protected, probably surrounded by beauty in their homes rather than ugliness, and were usually educated at home. They were almost always skilled in some craft, and had time to take care of their families (do we?) and fulfill their religious obligations. I truly believe that both men and women in traditional Islamic societies (not in modern fundamentalist Islamic societies which are merely extensions of modern civilization with an Islamic veneer) were happier and better off than people today in most parts of the modern world.

Back to 28th July: The high point of the presentation was that we were able to actually visit the shelters and see real "cases." Most of our participants, apart from one exceptional woman who actually reached out to these people, were distinctly uncomfortable in the face of such poverty and in the company of the admirable volunteers who had given up comfortable lives in the West to come to Morocco to give of themselves. The Bayti personnel are passionately enthusiastic about their work and the afternoon was enlightening. I had been worried about it: another lecturer droning on in French about an NGO to my exhausted, unenthusiastic participants. Alhamdulillah it went well and so did the dinner on the Corniche that evening – our last meal altogether.

Our final minor adventure was losing Jacob upon Carl's conscientious head-count in the bus. It was the first time in 5 weeks that anyone was seriously missing but we soon recovered him. Everyone was in good spirits as we rode back to our noisy, stuffy hotel. The Windsor was another poor choice on my part (the alternatives were not much better) but again, I underestimated the group's tolerance for living conditions that don't approach American standards. But, again, I think such an experience should be looked at objectively, against the backdrop of the living standards of the average Moroccan. The thousands of people who live in the cramped, tenement housing which we drove through on 28 July would probably love to spend a night at the Windsor Hotel! Had we imposed such hotels on the group throughout the trip, I would have been more sympathetic to complaints which came to me indirectly. We have all been put up in some very comfortable hotels in beautiful surroundings at the American taxpayer's expense, and this on top of many other unique opportunities offered to the participants within the context of the Seminar. We must not lose sight of the virtue of gratitude!

What concerns me more is that upon leaving Morocco the participants are shaking their heads thinking "this country really has to get its act together." Have we succeeded in putting them in touch with the real soul of the country, of the real Morocco? Or have we just filled their heads with a lot of depressing statistics? I rather feel there should have been more human contacts like the day out to the Berber countryside, and the homestays. I have a sense that our group needed more time for day-to-day contact with Moroccans.

As the time approaches for final farewells, I realise I have made 16 new friends and feel a special bond with each one. Through being given the opportunity to contribute to the group journal, I want to again express my gratitude and let everyone know how moved I was by the beautiful necklace and bracelet presented to me. I also want everyone to know that I am appreciative of their patience, long-suffering and tolerance of conditions and circumstances which, once the Seminar was underway, were largely beyond our control. I also appreciated the group's sense of humour as well as cooperation and good civic spirit. I wish all of you and your families the very best and hope our paths cross again.

DAY 36: WEDNESDAY, JULY 29 -- CASABLANCA

CARL DAWSON

6:45am. Wake up, too early, drink Sidi Ali, back to sleep.

9am. OK, good enough, but I gotta lie here and rest a little bit longer...

9:30am. Shower, down to the lobby. I choose to sit in the lobby, with a seminar participant who will remain nameless, because I love myself enough to conserve my energy instead of wasting it on the *faux guides* and shark taxi drivers of Casablanca. The house may be white, but it is far from pure. The seminar participant with no name tells me of a nocturnal visit paid to him and his roommate by a bat at around 3am. This admittedly offbeat occurrence had reduced our friend to a quivering wreck, thus affording his roommate the sight of a defender of American territorial integrity cowering beneath a blanket. It's just as well, I reflect, that the commies aren't coming anymore, except as immigrants. Suddenly I am overwhelmed by fatigue, excuse myself, and retire to my room, where sleep quickly overtakes me. Time passes. Slowly, gently, I find myself projected into an extraordinary vision that will remain with me forever.

The meeting room was long and rectangular, dominated by a heavy black table and about 25 chairs. There was no air-conditioning, so the windows hung open in the hopeful expectation of a breeze. But none came. There was only the noise of traffic on the main artery, which seemed to encircle the room eight or nine times before spiraling away towards the angry red glow of an industrial skyline. In the room sat 15 American teachers, each one bearing the thick black lines of a tattoo on the forehead. The letters were writ large, and they formed an acronym: NGO. And they chanted it like a mantra during their days, just as they had chanted another during their nights: AC!, AC!, AC!...

At the front of the room sat a speaker, and as I watched he spoke. Did he speak in English or in French? Was he one of the open and forthright ones? I do not know, for the image was blurred. I thought: it is possible for the media to be absent and yet for the spirit of *Le Matin* to be present; you can give a speaker a different audience, but you cannot separate speaker from social context. It was easy, I mused, to demand plain talk and honesty if you had a first amendment to go home to, but some people had to live here. It was then that the haze cleared, and I realized that what I bore witness to was far more than an honest speaker -- it was an act of courage.

The presentation reached its end, and my gaze passed around the room and over the teachers. Some were reading email, some were making notes. Others were smoking on the steps or revising holiday plans. A few were formulating complaints, but most were contemplating the beauty and complexity of a salient land, of Morocco. These last had recognized that beauty, that peculiar way in which this country focuses the mind on the essentials of existence, if only it can transcend the trivial discomforts.

And I thought of what they would take back, and I knew that in most cases it would be very great: photos and slides and classroom discussions, a window on another world, and that most valuable of gifts – perspective and distance on one's life, and an awakening of possibilities. Exchanges and exhibitions, a living link across the oceans and the centuries. There were a few, of course, who would do little or nothing, and suddenly I saw among them a Peace Corps Volunteer I had known. His time in Morocco, a paid holiday courtesy of the federal government, had passed all too quickly for him. For the children at the hospital in his village, he had never arrived. He was smiling and healthy and oblivious. And my mind drifted to the words of Omar Khayyam, sounding out across the ages like a bell that tolls for thee:

And as the cock crew
Those who stood before
the tavern, shouted "open then the door!
For you know what little while we have to stay
and once departed may return no more."

And then an enormous hand descended from above, and it began to tap each participant on the shoulder as it counted them. A shrill voice wailed: "it's the 34th day and you're still counting??!!" But the hand counted on, inexorably, like sands through the hourglass, and it counted 15, and it was satisfied.

With a jolt I awoke, drenched in sweat, breathing rapidly. It was 4:30am on Thursday the 30th of July 1998, and it was all but over. I did not know whether I had awoken from a dream or a reality, but I knew the lesson of the previous five weeks:

There is a heaven, and it is not air-conditioned.
It is hot and noisy and its name is Morocco.

MOROCCO EXIT
DAYS 37-38: THURSDAY - FRIDAY, JULY 30-31

AARON BRAUN

Made it for my son's birthday with 1:40 to spare. The only problem is he had to stick around the Delta office with me for a bit as I made a lost luggage claim... That walking stick I carted for over half the seminar had been lost [probably stolen], thanks to a Brussels airport bureaucrat who thought I might use it to threaten the pilot with iron-oxide poisoning, or perhaps hijack the plane back to Casa? Along with the stick, some of my pottery did not survive the airline baggage handlers.

JOHN CABE

As to our roundabout way of getting home, it actually worked out well. Even though a day late, we arrived earlier on Friday, and since I had a lengthy drive home from the airport, was able to get home at a reasonable hour. For the most part the airline folks were helpful. The overnight in Brussels was actually quite good, with excellent rooms and very good meals at dinner (wine and beer included if you were so inclined), and breakfast at the airline's expense. Even though our luggage came in late, I was guaranteed it would be delivered to my door the next morning. I live about 2.5 hours from the Atlanta airport, but by 9:30 A.M. Saturday, my bags were delivered to my door - minus the locks. Also, while in the airport getting info on my bags, some guy was trying to get a carpet back, which had been confiscated by customs. He was told he could not get it back, but he might be able to get a customs broker to get it and send it back to wherever it was bought, for a fee of course. So, not buying large carpets in Morocco might have been wise.

PETER HESS

The six of us going through Brussels missed our connection because Air Maroc was 3 hours late. We arrived at the gate 20 minutes before boarding to find no plane. One hour later a plane shows up; soon after, we see several members of the ground crew under the plane with an open manual. Two hours pass and they bring in a new plane. We were put up in a nice hotel for the night in Brussels, with standby status the next day for Hamburg (yes, we were heading west to go east). Of course we were late getting out of Brussels, and just barely made the connection in Hamburg for Atlanta. We eventually arrived in Atlanta sans luggage (which did arrive the next day). Anyway, I'm home.

BETTY LAU

Adventures in Andalusia

July 29-August 21, 1998

I was one of the last people to fly out of Mohammed V Airport, eager to compare the Islamic structures of Spain and Portugal to what I had seen in Morocco. I flew into Madrid after a sad farewell to the new friends and close companions of five wondrous but grueling weeks. I miss them, but am sustained by their camaraderie and the new friendships formed in Morocco.

My fears about being mugged in Madrid on the way to the hotel were unfounded as I left customs and saw Larry waiting for me at the exit. What a terrific surprise and surely an auspicious beginning to our travels. What follows are the highlights, in vignette form, of our adventures in *al Andalus*.

We didn't spend very long in Madrid—just long enough to visit the Prado and then the Museo Reinia Sofia to see Picasso's Guernica. I was amazed to see so many more of his other works, more than you could shake a stick at.

Mary had suggested a day trip to Segovia, so we picked up our rental car early the next day and headed out there. The aqueduct was spectacular. The double tiers of arches cut across the town and up a hill to end gradually in a short arch on the bottom of a wall. Although stairs led up the wall, an iron gate kept people from getting close to the top of the aqueduct. Curiosity overwhelmed me, and I climbed the iron fence, leaned out, and peered into the top. Now I knew how an aqueduct actually worked. The top was a flat, rock-lined channel that probably was covered in days of yore. Thanks to three junior high school boys, I also knew how deep it was. I climbed down and one of them took my place and clambered over the fence to stand in the channel. The edge came to just below his knees. He faced a nasty fall of 30' to the hillside. If he fell on the stair side, it would only be 8'.

Frantically flipping through the phrase book, I couldn't find anything appropriate to say. English would have to do. "Be careful!" I admonished him. He looked puzzled, so I repeated myself. He and his buddies conferred, and in halting English he replied, " No, no... problem okay."

Going back down the hill, I followed the other end of the aqueduct to where it turned and gradually became shorter and shorter, vanishing into a wall, which ran outside the city limits. I've read that the wall diminishes in height until it finally enters the ground and continues as a pipe.

The Alcazar was just what all castles look like, immense and imposing. A tight spiral staircase with high steps led to the top and a tremendous view of the town and countryside.

Thanks, Mary!

The next day we drove to Toledo to search for signs of Islamic influence. The Alcazar was a disappointment after Segovia. It had been rebuilt after having been bombed to rubble in the Spanish Civil War. Most of the rooms had been turned into exhibits of various arms through the ages. Upstairs, a gigantic map at the end of the hall marked areas of Spanish conquest, among them the southwestern United States, Mexico, Central America, most of South America, some Pacific islands, the Philippines, and a large chunk of Morocco. The upstairs rooms were reserved for paintings and souvenirs of Spanish victories, the most fascinating being the Battle of Tetuan. One room contained the tent and personal belongings of the ruler of Tetuan, who had to sign over his homeland to the Spanish. Other souvenirs included the pen used to sign the surrender. Captured Arab arms, munitions, and uniforms dominated the other rooms of memorabilia. Larry pointed out that the war museum did not contain a single reference to the Spanish-American War or any battle that Spain lost.

Wanting to see a how a mosque would fare in the land of Christians, we visited the Sinagoga de Santa Maria la Blanca, a mosque sold to the Jews and converted to a church in 1492. After Morocco, it was odd to see vaulted domes and horseshoe arches set off a traditional wooden, gilt overlay altar.

On an evening walk, I visited the 10th century Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz, the only surviving pre-Reconquista mosque in Toledo. The Christians had no qualms about using it for a church, and today, it's fenced off so no one can get inside. The horseshoe arches and pillars were lovely. If only I could have gotten inside!

The next day, August 3, we set off for Cordoba. On the way, we tried to squeeze in a visit to San Martin de Montalban, a former Visigothic fortress turned Moorish castle turned Christian bastion of the Knights Templar. Stopping in the town of the same name to ask for directions, we couldn't understand what was said, so we just drove in the direction people pointed. The castle was some distance from the town. We could see it afar, beckoning to us. But how to get there? Following intuition, we drove off onto an unmarked side road that was so narrow and overgrown with brambles the car was badly scratched. I briefly thought of the damage charges when we turned the car in. Ah well, the price of adventure! We stayed on the road until we reached a chain across it. A sign declared the fortress closed for restoration until July. But this was August. No wonder the road was unmarked. The powers that be were discouraging visitors.

The castle still seemed a good ways off. Our dilemma was solvable by driving around the chain or walking in the rest of the way. Reluctantly, we decided to turn back because we couldn't see the road condition ahead, nor did we want to hike and leave the car unattended, with all our belongings in it. Back out on the main road, I contented myself with telephoto shots of this tantalizing grand headquarters of the Knights Templar.

In Cordoba we learned the hard way to ignore road rogues. Street signs are posted on corners of buildings, but many are missing, thus providing employment for those who provide information on where to go, even if they don't know (for a tip, no less). We also learned that it's okay to drive on sidewalks and through pedestrian malls. We couldn't find our hotel so we got as close as we could and I got out and found it on foot. Because Larry refused to drive through the mall, we spent two hours circling the area. At 9:30 p.m., I insisted we drive through the mall and on a walkway adjacent to a church. I braced myself for cries of outrage and angry knocks on the car. *Pero nada.* People parted and made way for the car like ripples of a current flowing around a floating leaf. On the narrower streets, people pressed themselves against buildings or hastily ducked into doorways, just like in the Fez Medina.

The next day, we set off to explore the Mezquita, a former mosque turned into a cathedral. It was immense, having been sited on the foundations of a Visigothic church and enlarged by subsequent caliphs. Over 480 horseshoe arches anchor extraordinarily high, vaulted domes. To support the tremendous weight, the arches are piled up with other arches that crisscross and intersect transverse naves like a precision drill team. Delicate, gilded Byzantine mosaics (a gift from Constantine) grace the Mihrab.

Relatively few changes were made by the Christians after the Reconquista. Luckily, the city council and the people of Cordoba themselves realized what a unique treasure they had, and passed an edict in 1523 forbidding any changes on pain of death. Unfortunately, they were overruled in an appeal by the bishop to Charles V, who regretted his decision upon seeing the Mezquita on a subsequent visit. By then it was too late. A gigantic grand chapel that was to have been situated on the side of the Mezquita now occupies its gutted center. Tired tourists filled the pews. And the former minaret? An extra tall bell tower. What a lesson in getting all the facts before making a decision.

The most intriguing area of the Mezquita, however, was a bricked up, four-sided niche formed by four arches. The brickwork didn't go all the way to the top, so I saw gorgeous zellij reaching upwards into a vaulted dome. I also saw the crowned head of a religious statue. Why was this part bricked off? Could it be the statue had an anti-Muslim inscription or depicted something insulting to Islam? The other walled off areas were clearly under restoration, but this niche had no discernible entrance on any of the four bricked up sides.

After the Mezquita, we dropped by the Alcazar, former home of the Inquisition. Strangely, it is now a museum of Roman mosaics and Arab artifacts. No mention of the Inquisition anywhere. It's hard to believe such a peaceful setting, complete with garden and pool, could ever have been the site of hideous torture and murder in the name of the Prince of Peace.

A few kilometers northwest of Cordoba is Medina Azahara, the stunning capital of Abd al Rahman III. Like the Mezquita, Medina Azahara is characterized by huge horseshoe arches of alternating red and white stripes. This fabulous city is the site of on-going excavations. I spoke with the archaeologists, but alas, I have even less Spanish than French and was unsuccessful in finding out what they were doing. They were digging into a 3' x 3' patch of ground that was marked off by string. What were they looking for?

This former capital was built on three terraces cut into a hillside at the foot of the Sierra Morena Mountains. Each terrace was reserved for a particular function, with specific living quarters. The upper terrace, as expected, was home to the nobility and the Alcazar (fantastic view of the plains and the rest of the city). The middle terrace contained the gardens, pools and orchards, and servants' quarters.

By the time I figured out how to get to the lowest terrace, the site was closing for the afternoon rest. I was upset at myself because we were going to Granada next, and I had not seen the main attraction, Abd al Rahman's royal reception hall.

Driving to Granada, Larry patiently stopped at every castle and scenic spot along the way so I could take photographs. The castles are strung like pearls across every high hill. Many were partially destroyed, and we could see cathedrals rising on the other side of breached walls. We only explored one, the Almovodar del Rio, not far from Medina Azahara. This was the most spectacular of all the castles. Perched on a high, rocky promontory at the end of a steep winding road, Castle Almovodar imposes its presence on the town far below. The gatekeeper waved at us to park behind his car at the gate rather than in the tiny lot further on. Arrows on the ground allowed us to take a self-tour that did not include any of the inner rooms of the castle. What a pity. I had wanted to see a medieval kitchen, the stables, and where the ordinary folks worked and lived. No written information was available, not even in Spanish. Having arrived at lunchtime, we were the only visitors. We strolled about, pretending to be the lord and lady of Almovodar.

In Granada, we followed our strategy of going straight to the tourist office to get directions to the hotel. Streets are poorly marked, even more so than in Cordoba. It seemed as though fully half the streets, especially the ones we were looking for, were unsigned. We discovered the hotel was outside the town, unlike Toledo and Cordoba, where we were in or very near the heart of the historic district. Nothing much to do at the hotel, so we hailed a cab and went to a Chinese restaurant downtown which had excellent cuisine for reasonable prices. One of the waiters suggested we change hotels to be closer in.

The following day, we explored downtown Granada and reserved a room for the next day in a hotel on the main street, close to the excellent Chinese restaurant and within walking distance of the plaza where the minibuses to the Alhambra started from. Walking up toward the Alhambra, we ate a paella lunch on the patio of a wonderful outdoor café and strolled leisurely back downtown.

Rising early the following morning, we changed hotels. Hotel parking was an extra charge, and we experienced our first ride in a car elevator. You back your car in, ride down with it and pull into a cramped, tiny area. It took ten minutes of rocking back and forth (with coaching from the clerk) to get into the last space. At least the car would be safe. No one could leave without checking at the desk to have the elevator activated. We were free to tackle the Alhambra.

Undeniably lovely, it is a bit overrated. It's actually a complex of buildings atop the highest mount in Granada. The main buildings are the Nazaries, the Generalife and the palace of Carlos V. The Nazaries, former palace of the caliphs of Granada, was where Isabelle and Ferdinand negotiated the supposed India voyage with Columbus and where they held his reception upon his return. Much had been restored with a Christian influence and much had not. Larry and I did not feel the sense of history and awe that we experienced in visiting previous Islamic monuments in Cordoba and Toledo. Perhaps it was too reminiscent of Disneyland, with its jam-packed crowds. Or perhaps it was the heavy-handed Christian restoration.

The Generalife was the caliphal summer retreat, comprising carefully tended gardens, pools and a unique irrigation system that still sends cascades of water down the two raised sides of a marvelous outdoor staircase.

Most of the Palace of Carlos V was closed off. We could only access the circular, marble pillared courtyard and the Alhambra museum, housed in some of its former rooms. A museum of modern art occupied some of the upstairs rooms. I tried to visualize the elegant Islamic buildings that had been razed to make room for this circular palace.

We lunched again at our favorite outdoor café overlooking the Darro River, with the Alhambra looming over the area. The waiter (or perhaps the café owner) was a kindly gentleman who took the utmost care in changing the position of the umbrella that shaded us without blocking the view of the Alhambra. Not that the view mattered; the Alhambra was so close and so high, that to enjoy it, one had to crane one's neck upward; and that didn't happen very often. It was easier to peer downwards into the Darro.

The following day, Larry made a sacrifice worthy of a saint. Instead of going west to Seville, he drove north 75 miles, back to Medina Azahara so I could finish exploring the lower terrace. Hastily paying the entrance fee, I raced to the lower terrace, passing the same group of archaeologists. I could only see the head and shoulders of the man with the pickaxe in the excavation pit. He pulled out pieces of a clay drainage pipe and a large rock. The others were sifting the dirt and setting aside tiny bits of treasure or rubble.

On one side of the terrace were the foundations of the mosque, ablution area, the poor house and the rest of the city. On the far side, abutting the gardens of the middle terrace, was the Salon of Abd al Rahman III.

It was absolutely breathtaking. Receiving top priority for restoration, its horseshoe arches were repainted a bright red and white, marble pillars scrubbed to a high polish and new plaster added and carved to match re-assembled fragments. Other stucco fragments lay in arcs on the ground in front of the arch they belonged to.

The salon fronts onto more gardens and a large, rectangular pond. Roped off, the walkways and pool ledges were covered with thousands of stucco fragments with graceful arabesques ending in nowhere. Every grouping had a sign marking the area or room they belonged to. Puzzle fanatics would find themselves in heaven here.

Satisfied, I could finally go to Seville. Larry had fallen asleep in the car waiting for me. Amazing, considering the blazing heat of midday. We ate our typical on- the-road rations: bocadillos, fruit, and water.

Seville is aptly called The Oven of Spain. The hotel clerk commented that people expected him, a native of Seville, to be used to the heat; but he felt as hot as any of the tourists. I nodded sympathetically, trying not to smirk. After Marrakesh, I didn't think 41 degrees centigrade overly hot. I looked forward to our reunion with Jerry S. and his wife. Jerry had asked me to make reservations for them.

We spend our first day just resting and getting oriented. The next day we explore the Alcazar. It is marvelous and unending. The architectural mix is awesome: Islamic base with Baroque and Renaissance remodeling. The gardens are magnificent.

Seville is full of Moorish style buildings, more so than Cordoba and Granada. Horseshoe arches and crenellated edges abound in the architecture. Everything closes during the afternoons, so I the time reading my books from Morocco and writing in my journal at McDonald's. This is one of the fanciest McDonald's I've ever seen. The floors and walls are marble. A marble staircase wends its way upstairs to view seating. The air conditioning is superb. Our hotel has none during the mornings and very little during the afternoon and evenings. I worry that Jerry and his wife won't like it. The hotel is quaint and has a strong breeze in the morning when the shutters and windows are opened. There is no hotel restaurant, so a maid brings us our continental breakfasts every morning.

We are here to see the third surviving Almohad minaret in the world, the Giralda. The mosque has long since been razed to make way for a gigantic cathedral. Our Fulbright group has seen the sister minarets in Rabat and Marrakesh. Unlike the Mezquita, this minaret is open to the public. Consisting of 35 stone ramps leading to the top, it is in a remarkable state of preservation albeit stripped of its Islamic features, such as the original doors and artifacts. Some are saved and displayed in the minaret's central niches. These were places for the imam to stop and pray or meditate on his horseback ride to the top. The original top has been replaced by a belfry. Larry was determined to hike up with me. It was surprisingly easy. The grade was gentle—no more than 4 degrees. It was like walking up a spiral, except the ramp was a square instead of a circle.

Seville is a city of many cathedrals, but the most interesting was one I suspected to be a former mosque, Sor Angela de la Cruz. The entryway was paneled with familiar zellij patterns, and alongside the main altar in a small side room was a domed chapel containing a statue of Mary. All the walls were covered with zellij. I plunked pesetas into the donation box for the continued restoration and preservation of this special church.

In another cathedral, an elderly gentleman noticed me slip in and proceeded to guide me to each *capilla* and explain the saint it was dedicated to, lovingly pointing at each statue. I could only guess at what he was saying because we had no common language. I recognized the names of some of the saints and nodded in what I hoped were the appropriate places in his monologue. Larry came in, and the elderly gentleman began again. To speed things up, I grabbed Larry's arm and propelled him toward the saints and named them, pointing and gesturing widely while keeping an eye on the elderly tour master. He beamed approvingly at us. We thanked him and graciously exited, depositing a few pesetas in the collection box by the door.

Time for our final dinner at a classy seafood restaurant in Seville. We left a note for Jerry S. and his wife in case they arrived late at the hotel. Seated outdoors, we splurged on a wonderful meal, ordering lots and eating slowly to give Jerry and Renee time to catch up with us. Alas! No Singers, but some sidewalk serenaders came by and were ordered to leave by paid restaurant security.

We concluded our jaunt in Spain with a side trip to Italica, a Roman ruin similar to Volubilis. The majority of the columns and arches were gone. The floor mosaics were gorgeous. Many were still colorful, based on motifs of gods and goddesses and other mythological beings. The stadium was well preserved as well as the theater, which was still undergoing restoration.

Italica was our last stop in Spain. From there we drove into Albufeira, Portugal for a couple of days of R and R. Albufeira is a jammin' tourist resort with a famous body to body beach. Judging from the languages we heard on the streets, all the local Portuguese must have fled. In a central plaza, a group of Peruvian musicians in full Plains Indian regalia (feather bonnets and all) played Andean music on pan pipes, guitars and drums. What a sight they were!

After Albufeira, we moved on to Henry the Navigator's main forts: Sagres, Pt. Sao Vicente and Beliche. Sir Francis Drake and 300 men did a thorough job sacking them. The archaeologists didn't have much to restore. All that was left were a few bricks and sections of walls. It was scary standing by the fort wall looking over the Atlantic to the next fort. Strong winds whipped over white- capped sapphire blue waves that crashed against the shore below.

In Lisbon we found a dynamite Chinese restaurant, the Guo Tai. Expo was on, but we weren't interested in facing the tremendous crowds that would surely be there. We limited ourselves to scouting out the neighborhood and visiting St. George Castle, formerly a (you guessed it) Moorish fortress built on a Visigothic site. We abandoned our original plan to walk up the steep bluff and hopped onto one of the antique electric trolleys that creakily hauled its human cargo to the top.

From Lisbon, we advanced into the northern countryside on side roads, exploring out of the way places. Moorish castles were in abundance, but unfortunately, we missed out on the best preserved one. Every town and village had its historic center and tourist office. Some were egregious and garish examples of rampant commercialism while others retained an aura of quaintness and charm despite the onslaught of tourism.

The Chinese word for Portugal is *Pu-tao Guo*, or Nation of Grapes. The name is apropos. Vineyards fill the country landscape, and where grapes are absent, olive trees reign as far as the hilly horizon.

The nearly new rental car sustained a good many scratches and a front to rear crease. The front rubber strip that protected the bumper had been partially torn off when a careless hotel clerk moved the car into the hotel garage and struck the corner of a retaining wall on a tight turn. He "forgot" to tell us about it. The car rental office directed us to their garage for repair; we thought the strip would be re-stapled back on. It took over an hour to find the garage, hidden in the bowels of a huge apartment complex. I hoped Avis had called and explained the problem because the mechanics knew no English. Handing over the paperwork, I pointed at the bumper guard. They scrutinized the work order and conferred; I tensed myself for the bad news that the car would be tied up for one day when suddenly one of them seized the detached end of the rubber strip and yanked it completely off the car. "Okay?" he grinned. Then he folded it and authoritatively tossed it in the trash can.

I was shocked at the speed with which the problem was solved. "Okay, okay. Let's go, Larry, before they change their minds and charge us!"

"Okay, okay!" they echoed, smiling broadly.

We thanked the mechanics profusely: "*Obrigado, obrigado*!" We were there for less than five minutes. We left with a profound respect for Portuguese mechanical skills, efficiency, and common sense.

On the eve of Larry's birthday, we decided to splurge and spend a couple of nights in a *pousada*. Pousadas are government-run hotels in refurbished castles and manors. They are very expensive, but who could pass up the chance to sleep in a castle? We chose the pousada in Vila Nova de Cerveira, on the northern river border with Spain. For entertainment we strolled the streets and eventually boarded a ferry to ride to the Spanish side and back. The ferry was small, with a capacity of perhaps 6-8 vehicles. The size didn't matter since the trip to Spain took only a few minutes. We noticed that the captain dallied on the Portuguese side as long as possible and stayed on the Spanish side just long enough to load passengers and cars.

It was hilarious watching him leave the Spanish dock while the last car was still moving into position on the deck. Larry theorized the captain and two-man crew delayed on the Portuguese side as long as possible to eat and shoot the breeze with visiting friends. On the Spanish side they would have no one to talk to.

The pousada was well furnished, but far from luxurious, and definitely not worth the hundred dollar per day per person charge. When I pulled the curtains open, the entire rod fell, leaving the curtains in a heap on the floor. The soap dish was broken, and the toilet continuously ran. The repairman re-installed the curtain rod, but couldn't do anything about the soap dish except balance it in place. And I repaired the toilet before he arrived because I couldn't stand the noise anymore. I think the government just takes ruined castles and manors, the ones not worth restoring for the tourist trade, and sites hotels in them to create jobs and boost the cash flow. A restaurant manager had told us that unemployment is extremely high in Portugal.

We drove east toward Braganca, stopping at Citania de Briteiros, the site of a Celtic ruin so Larry could pay homage to his ancestors by visiting the ancestral digs. All that remained of this former village on a rocky hilltop were the foundations of homes, fences, and ceremonial buildings. It was quite extensive. The discoverer of the site had reconstructed two of the cylindrical shaped homes. All the structures were built of shaped stones placed so closely together that no mortar was needed. Pointed, thatched roofs completed the homes.

Unable to reach Braganca before nightfall, we spent the night in Vieira do Minho, where the hotel price mysteriously increased by 1,000 escudos (about US$6) from the night before.

That morning, we drove furiously to reach Braganca Castle. Surprisingly, it still stood within the original medieval town walls. Not knowing we could have driven into the medieval area and parked on the castle grounds, we parked a long walk away. The castle was fun to explore. All the original wooden structures had long ago rotted away. It was odd seeing turrets with doors at the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floor levels leading to nowhere because the rooms beyond them were gone forever.

Driving south, we spent the night in the town of Guarda. Arriving late, nothing but a hunch led me to navigate us toward the medieval town center and inexpensive lodging. I amazed myself. Directionally challenged from birth, I still get lost in certain Seattle neighborhoods. The main sight here is the gothic cathedral that we couldn't enter because we left before it opened, trying to get back to Lisbon before dark.

On the road we feasted on our final picnic lunch of sandwiches made with Bimbo Bread, finished by a dessert of fruit and Filipinos (donuts with various toppings).

As soon as we reached Lisbon and unloaded our stuff, we hurried to a neighborhood mall so I could compare it to the ones back home. Larry napped in the car. I discovered the mall was no different from any upscale mall in the U.S.

Exhausted, we ate our last meal at the superb Guo Tai and packed our things for the next day's flight. I spent my last free hour roaming the streets near the hotel, using up my film to empty the cameras.

We lucked out at the car return depot. No one questioned us about the battered condition of the car. I heaved a sigh of relief.

From Lisbon, Larry and I flew to Washington, D.C. to stay with some friends from my college days. I couldn't go back to Seattle without seeing the Star Wars exhibit at the Smithsonian.

I will always remember the weeks of munching through Morocco and the joy of comparing the zellij and architecture I saw in Spain and Portugal with what I saw and learned about in Morocco. And above all, I cherish the memories of friendships newly made.